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THE BEGGAR'S APE: A JACOBEAN SATIRE

By T. P. Chidanand

Spenser's poems were imitated by a host of writers, fascinated as they were by his verse techniques and the allegorical patterns. Of these *Prosopopia or Mother Hubberd's Tale* found a special favour with the imitators, what with the 'calling-in' of the poem, the stir it caused in the literary circles and the disfavour of the Establishment which it brought to Spenser whose pique at slow preferment had made him wield the fiery scourge. It must be remembered that the Elizabethan Age was an age of vigorous controversies, scurrilous pamphlets and raging polemics, which found special delight in pressing into service a merciless whip of cruel satire. It is now being proved that, contrary to the popular belief, the Elizabethan mind, in spite of its being greatly thrilled by new discovery and new adventure, was often a prey to pessimism, being overawed by the ideas of mutability, the degeneration of man, the decay of social order and indeed of the world which, it was apprehended, was approaching its end. All this erupted in literature in the form of scathing attacks on different parts of the body politic.[1]

Spenser's aim was obviously to scourge the political happenings of the time and lament his neglect after all the adulation he had heaped on the Imperial Votaress, his beloved Gloriana or The Faery Queene. The traditional form of animal fable helped him in masking his intent but at times the mask was thin and the intent showed and this brought on him the wrath of the powers that be. Spenser's imitators, taking a cue from this, carefully circulated their concoctions and rarely dared to burst out into print. *The Beggar's Ape*, which closely imitates Spenser's *Mother Hubberd's Tale*, was published eleven years after the death of the author, one Richard Niccols, an Oxford graduate who died in 1616. The poem, until recently, was attributed to Drayton who in spite of his 'translunary things' was but a minor poet and a minor satirist.

The poem was probably written in 1607 but either circumstances hindered its publication or Niccols thought it unsafe to publish the poem in view of its obvious implications. Some lines in a poem called *A Winter Night's Vision* may afford some clue to the delay in the publication of the poem:

> She, that whilome beggar-like her beggars ape did
>   sing,
> Which iniur'd by the guilt of time to light she durst
>   not bring.

But what is this 'guilt of the time'? To understand the phrase we have probably to go to the history of the period. When James I came to the throne two very capable men, Sir Walter Raleigh and Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, lost favour with the King and were in consequence sent to the Tower of London. Almost simultaneously James I showed favour to two worthless men of the time, Philip Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, and Montgomery Edwards, Baron of Cherbury, and invested them with authority.

James I, as we know, was no administrator and in consequence corruption swiftly invaded the court and the government. The court banditti and the titled marauders helped themselves to public money and as a result of this the Government treasury was almost completely depleted. Alarmed at this, James I in desperation turned to his nefarious advisers. They thought of an ingenious plan to replenish the dried up coffers of the Government. Titles were to be conferred for certain neat sums of money irrespective of the person's worth or his services to the state. Any fool or scoundrel could buy a title if he could spare the required sum of money. The prices of the titles varied according to the dignity or the so-called honour they were supposed to confer.

The sale of titles became one of the great scandals of the time and brought James I into disrepute. People grew furious and scathing pamphlets came out. Spenser had shown exceptional courage in mounting almost a frontal attack on Lord Burghley and his son Robert Cecil, the corrupt courtiers who had battened on the public exchequer. The memories of Spenser's *Mother Hubberd's Tale* were still green in people's mind and many an angry young man, furious at the corruptions of the time, imitated Spenser while lashing at the corrupt politicians and their deeds. This was especially so with the Oxford graduates with whom, it appears, Spenser was a special favourite.

Anti-Scottish sentiment was now high and people felt indignant with James I. It is possible that *The Beggar's Ape* pillories 'the wisest fool in Christendom'. The writer of the article on *The Beggar's Ape* in *Huntington Library Bulletin* (No. 6, 1934) is of the opinion that James I stands for the Ape in *The Beggar's Ape* in as much as it is he who, being weak-kneed, permits Robert Cecil, the Earl of Salisbury, to carry on his predatory administration.

The poem was almost a frontal attack on the sovereign. During Queen Elizabeth's reign even a sly glance at the Queen and her affairs meant a life-long confinement in the Tower, if not the amputation of hands or the losing of one's neck. The memories of that reign were still fresh in men's minds and it was only the foolhardy who could dare launch such an attack. But poems and prose pamphlets could circulate in manuscript form and men of the Stationer's Register could hardly do anything about this. It is, therefore, possible that *The Beggar's Ape* might have circulated in manuscript form delighting the minds of the young and the fiery who had a special taste for such stuff. This explains why the poem was printed in 1627, nearly eleven years after Niccols's death. There was every danger of the poem being called in as Spenser's was. Spenser had got off lightly in view of his prestige and the 'crouching' and the 'fawning' which, as he himself said, he had so basely attempted.

Niccols probably wrote the poem because he wanted to open the nation's eyes to the prevalence of vice and corruption which was bringing into disrepute the sceptred isle, the jewel amongst the nations. The sale of titles and privileges must have greatly angered him and he seems to pour his wrath into this beast fable of his. *The Beggar's Ape* may be summarized as follows:

It was the month of August, the same month of pestilence that we find in *Mother Hubberd's Tale*, which gives a symbolic background to the sickness of the nation and its affairs. The poet was abroad walking leisurely with no special destination in his mind. Very soon he entered a grove. As he sauntered along he saw a group of beggars telling stories to each other. One of them told this story of the Ape.

Some years ago when the Lion was crowned the King of the Forest many obscure beasts suddenly found grace.

A beast of 'Scorpio's brood' (i.e. serpent's), who before he was metamorphosed was a man, was now changed into an ape and banished to the *Ape's Isle*. His tail was cut off for his villainy and the deceits which he had practised on other beasts. He now managed to come to the Lion's court where he met the Goat. He entreated the Goat to enlist him in his service, but the Goat politely declined his offer. Sorely disappointed at this the Ape approached the Fox, an old acquaintance of his who now occupied an important place in the Court. The Fox who knew that the Ape's guile was infinite thought that it would be advantageous to him to have the Ape's services. He, therefore, affectionately greeted the Ape and enlisted him in his service. Together they formed an alliance. They now turned their attention to the Goat, a lecherous courtier, and the Ass, who had come to the Court loaded with his father's riches on his back. The Fox and the Ape then successfully sold knighthoods to the Ass and the Goat in exchange for their wealth. Emboldened by their initial success they offered for sale similar honours in consideration for certain other amounts of fees. The noble Elephant, a worthy counsellor of the Lion and the keeper of his treasury, suspected the Ape and attempted to stop his knavery.

The Ape flattered the Ass and induced him to challenge the Horse to a race. The Ass is completely disgraced and returns home humbled and poor. The Ape now makes it possible for the Wolf to prey upon the small beasts of the forest. But when the Wolf attempts to entice the urchin hedgehog away and eat him up, the Squirrel prevents him from doing so. The Wolf who has a powerful alliance with the Ape succeeds in getting the urchin hedgehog and the Squirrel banished from the court.

The Elephant who sees the Ape's knavery finally orders the Ape's revenue to be cut off from the Royal treasury. The Fox likewise loses his income. The two then decide to go to the countryside and instigate the Ox and the Sheep to utter seditions and then charge them with treason. This would entail the forfeiture of their estates which they could then merrily receive as loyal citizens who had brought the criminals to book. The Ox and the Sheep unsuspectingly utter the commonplaces about the life at court and the wicked courtiers. The Ox makes a particular mention of the fact that the noble Horse who so often battled against the Eagle and the Dragon is now without comfort. Many honest soldiers likewise are reduced to beggary. Making a show of loyalty to the King, the Fox and the Ape declare the speeches to be treasonous and report the matter to the Lion. A court is now held for the trial of the Sheep and the Horse. The defence of the Ox is sufficient to clear him of the charge. The Elephant now denounces the Ape as a false implicator of charges. The Fox is then questioned by the Elephant who wants to know if the Fox is prepared to indict on oath the Ox and the Sheep. The Book is then brought into the court. But when the Fox is about to take a false oath, the great God Jove who cannot bear the pitiful sacrifice of the Ox and the Sheep on the altar of untruth launches his thunderbolt from Olympus, which frightens the Fox and singes his fur. The Ape is then whipped about the forest.

The poem directly remainds us of Spenser's *Mother Hubberd's Tale*. The principal characters, the Fox and the Ape, have all the Spenserian characteristics, namely that they are peripatetic rogues who practise all kinds of knaveries in search of fortune. Like Spenser's Fox and Ape, they ultimately reach the Court where they find a rich field for their chicaneries and cozenages. The similarities are so many and so obvious that they give an impression that Niccols has straightaway borrowed his characters from Spenser. The poem appears to be a direct sequel to *Mother Hubberd's Tale*.

Now the question is, who is the Ape and who is the Fox in Niccols's poem? Since the Fox in Spenser represents Burghley it is possible that the Fox in *The Beggar's Ape* represents Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury and son of Burghley, who succeeded his father in office. It is difficult to say for whom the Ape stands, though there is a possibility that Henry Howard, the Earl of Northampton, may be identified as the 'ape', since Howard's family was a Catholic family and Niccols contemptuously refers to the Ape as of 'Scorpio's brood'. J. P. Collier identifies the Elephant as Thomas Sackville, Baron of Backhurst and Earl of Dorset, who was Lord Treasurer until 1608.[2]

But while *Mother Hubberd's Tale* has four spheres of action, viz. labour, the Church, the Court and the Administration,[3] *The Beggar's Ape* lashes out at the court and the administration only.

Spenser as a satirist was an Elizabethan Dryden, his kinship with Dryden being in basic humanity and generosity, largeness of view, vigour and verve, etc.[4] Indignation in Spenser is softened by sly humour, though at other times Spenser's scorn is full of animal spirits, anticipating Samuel Butler. But none of these things are found in Niccols's poem, the principal aim of the poet being to expose one of the festering evils of the time, namely the sale of titles for raising money for the Treasury.

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1. D. C. Allen, 'The Degeneration of Man and the Renaissance Pessimism', *Studies in Philology*, XXXV (1938), pp. 202-27.
2. See the article entitled 'The Beggar's Ape', *Huntington Library Bulletin*, No. 6 (1934).
3. Edmund Spenser, *Complaints*, ed. W. L. Renwick (1928), pp. 225-9.
4. W. B. C. Watkins, *Shakespeare and Spenser* (1950), pp. 268-9.

'THERE WAS A TIME...'

By S. Jagadisan

THE FIRST four stanzas of Wordsworth's *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality* were composed on 27 March 1802. Coleridge joined the Wordsworths on 19 March 1802 at Dove Cottage. 'Dejection: a letter' was composed by Coleridge on 4 April 1802. It was originally addressed to Sara Hutchinson and ran to 340 lines. The original draft was revised and its length reduced to 139 lines. The poem under the title *Dejection: an Ode* appeared in the *Morning Post*, ironically enough, on 4 October 1802, the day of Wordsworth's wedding with Mary Hutchinson.[1] The Ode in its final form was addressed to the anonymous 'Lady'. The influence of the two poets on each other since their meeting in 1797 was poetically fruitful, culminating in *The Lyrical Ballads*.

The Dejection Ode, unlike *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, *Christabel*, and *Kubla Khan*, is most deeply autobiographical and intensely personal in tone. The Ode may be regarded as Coleridge's swan song, the last of his better poems. The main point of similarity between the *Dejection Ode* and Wordsworth's *Immortality Ode* is that both of them describe the failure of sensibility. The two poets were robbed of a particular personal faculty of vision.

> There hath past away a glory from the earth. (Wordsworth)
>
> My genial spirits fail. (Coleridge)

Another point of similarity is that the two poets perceive and emphasise the principle of joy immanent in the world of Nature. The recurrent use of the word 'joy' and its synonyms in the first few stanzas of Wordsworth's Ode adds emphasis to his ecstatic experience of Nature (*delight*, st. 2; *joyous*, *joy*, *jollity*, *child of joy*, st. 3; *jubilee*, *bliss*, *joy*, st. 4). Coleridge also identifies the governing, operative principle in Nature as joy.

'This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist' (*D.O.*, l. 62) —an echo of Wordsworth's 'celestial light', 'glory', 'visionary gleam'—inheres in joy. All forms of Nature, sounds and colours, are bathed in the spirit of joy.

> Joy, Lady, is the spirit and the power,
> Which wedding Nature to us gives in dower.
>
> (*D.O.*, l. 68)

The first four stanzas of *The Immortality Ode* describe a movement from a sense of alienation to one of identification. The joy and beauty permeating the world of Nature but remind Wordsworth of what he has lost, 'the glory and the dream'. The mood of regret generated by the incompatibility between Nature's aspect and his own inner isolation reaches its climax in the line, 'To me alone there came a thought of grief.' He recovers from it by giving it poetic utterance, which 'gave that thought relief'. With the pressure of grief relieved, the poet overcomes his initial sense of alienation or distance between himself and nature and re-establishes sympathy and identification with her.

> And I again am strong:
> No more shall grief of mine the season wrong.

The tone of Wordsworth's Ode is paradoxical in the sense that it is a lament in rapturous terms. His participation in Nature's universal festivity is ecstatic. Heart and head unite in their sensitive response to Nature.

> My heart is at your festival,
>   My head hath its coronal,
> The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.

Though Wordsworth bemoans the loss of vision, his capacity for inward response has not completely deserted him. In contrast, the unrelieved pathos of Coleridge's lament becomes evident, when the following two lines are examined in juxtaposition.

> I hear, I hear, with joy I hear. (Wordsworth)
> I see, but not feel. (Coleridge)

Wordsworth's triple repetition of 'I hear' is an expression of the inviolable harmony he enters into with Nature. Coleridge, whose loss is total, cannot attune himself to rediscover 'the light, the glory, the fair luminous mist'. There was a time when he could hear Nature's language and drink her glory. In his letter to his brother George (March 1798), Coleridge writes:

> I devote myself in poetry to elevate the imagination and set the affections in right tune by the beauty of the inanimate impregnated, as with a living soul, by the presence of life.
>
> I love fields and woods and mountains with almost a *visionary* fondness and because I have found *benevolence and quietness growing within me* as that fondness increased, therefore I should wish to be the means of implanting it in others.*[2]

The attitude of mystic exaltation is confirmed in *Frost at Midnight* (Feb. 1798):

> So shalt thou see and hear
> The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
> Of that eternal language, which thy God
> Utters, who from eternity doth teach
> Himself in all, and all things in Himself.

Less austere and ecstatic, the passage, nevertheless, sounds Wordsworthian.

In 1802, Coleridge suffered from an inability to listen to 'the poetry of Nature' described in his account of the origin and design of *The Lyrical Ballads*. His lament over the gap between his physical perception of the outward forms of Nature and his own emotional disengagement rings deep. His description of Nature in her subdued aspects—'balmy and serene', 'tint of yellow green', 'thin clouds', 'crescent moon', 'stars now sparkling, now bedimmed'—is suggestive of a melancholy mood. We notice two kinds of contrast in *The Ode to Dejection*. While the poet is alive to the external beauty of Nature—'I see'—he has become incapable of responding with an inward thrill—'but not feel'—to the 'excellently fair' forms. The second kind of contrast, whic hrenders Coleridge's predicament pathetic, is his painful awareness that the storm without, which is a projection of the storm within, will blow over. The 'Mad Lutanist' would turn' balmy and serene'. But the poet is too deeply caught in the storm of his soul to recover.

---

* Italics mine.

According to Coleridge, it is the poet's creative vision or faculty which endows Nature with life and sensibility. The world of Nature, by itself, is an insentient, 'inanimate, cold world' (*D.O.*, l. 51).

I had found
That outward forms, the loftiest, still receive
Their finer influence from the life within:
Fair cyphers else.
(*Lines written in the Album at Elibingerode*, 1799)

'These lines are the germ of the poem *Dejection*' (Garrod).[3] The mood of Nature springs from the mood of the perceiver.[4] 'And in our life alone does Nature live' (*D.O.*, l. 48). The inner chord—'strong music in the soul'—vibrates with joy in those pure of heart, who, while overflowing with pure bliss in moments of revelation, see themselves in Nature. Since Coleridge has lost his capacity for subjective reaction, he

. . . may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.
(*D.O.*, ll. 45-6)

The damage caused to his power of perception is more permanent. An inner paralysis has seized him.

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
A stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,
Which finds no outlet, no relief,
In word, or sigh, or tear. (*D.O.*, ll. 21-4)

(Cf. To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief.
Immortality Ode)

The outward forms of Nature, therefore, can no longer revitalize or recreate the poet in Coleridge. Wordsworth sees Nature apparelled in celestial light, the light proceeding from his own soul. While Wordsworth suggests or implies the idea of subjective response and confirms it not by exposition, but by the communication of his authentic experience, Coleridge defines it in more specific and unmistakable terms.

Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
A light, a glory...and element! (*D.O.*, ll. 53-8)

Wordsworth enjoys two sources of compensation and consolation in his loss—the mood of recollection and philosophic enquiry.

Hence in a season of calm weather
...evermore. (*I.O.*, ll. 62-8)

We will grieve not...philosophic mind.
(*I.O.*, ll. 180-7)

Endowed with the power of intense, vivid recollection reinforced by a deeply felt mystic experience and perception, he could re-live his original experience in his imagination or memory. *The Immortality Ode* and *Tintern Abbey* lines may be described as poetic exercises in recollection. *Tintern Abbey* (the miniature *Prelude*) is a record of mystic experience distilled in Wordsworth's memory. He could revisit Nature in his imagination and capture her magic, even when separated from her by space and time. Retaining the twofold faculty, memory and philosophic contemplation, he can still 'keep watch over man's mortality' and 'see the splendour in the grass and glory in the flower'. Coleridge could rely on no internal resources (except, perhaps 'abstruse research') to sustain him, for he had sunk beyond recovery into a state of total torpor.

Both the poets strike an elegiac note. Wordsworth's regret, however, is eclipsed by the thrill of joyous recollection. His Ode is an ecstatic lyrical outburst. Coleridge is more subdued and pensive. Wordsworth begins his Ode with a description of his personal experience and later universalizes it by using the first person plural. 'Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting.' His

Ode is in the nature of a 'public utterance'. He strikes a note of confidence, joy and recovery. Coleridge's experience is essentially personal, less mystical, more poignant and pathetic.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Cf. *Selected Poems of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. James Reeves (First Pub. 1959; Sixth Reprint 1971, London: Heinemann), p. 145.
2. Cf. Norman Fruman *Coleridge, The Damaged Archangel* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1971) p. 300.
3. *Coleridge, Poetry and Prose*, Introduction and Notes by H. W. Garrod (London: Humphrey Milford, 1928) p. 181.
4. Cf. *Selections from the Poems of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. A. Hamilton Thompson (Cambridge: University Press, 1923), pp. 140-41.

THE INFLUENCE OF DICKENS ON GEORGE GISSING

By M. K. Choudhury

George Gissing's biographer, Jacob Korg, thinks that 'Dickens has often been wrongly regarded as the most important influence on Gissing.'[1] This remark needs to be clarified. Gissing came under the influence of various writers, both English and continental, like Dickens, Meredith, George Eliot, and Browning; Balzac and Zola; Tourgeniev and Dostoievsky, all of whom contributed to his own characteristic development. But Gissing was never imitative. The true vitality of Gissing is to be found in his desire to be original. He aspired to attain a distinctive place in the hierarchy of literature. To be precise, Gissing wanted to be a creed by himself. He was nobody's disciple, and fashioned his novels with so much independence that, practically speaking, in our attempt to trace his sources we have to be content with very indefinite, often conjectural results, save in the case of Dickens. Dickens, thus, is not the most important but rather the most traceable influence on Gissing. Incidentally, Gissing has suffered much in being always compared to Dickens.

There is a sharp duality in Gissing's attitude to Dickens. He could not love any other author as intensely as he loved Dickens. From his early boyhood he was an avid reader of Dickens's works which meant for him a separate world by itself. Dickens entered into Gissing's very earliest remembered experience and was respected as a domestic God. His memory was stocked with the characters and incidents in Dickens's novels, and he went out to find their prototypes in actual life. When in the year 1877 he first came to London, his primary intention was not to find out a job, but, as he said, 'to go hither and thither in London's immensity, seeking for places which had been made known to me by Dickens'. In his essay 'Dickens in Memory' (1901), Gissing tells us how Forster's *Life of Dickens* again and again renewed his courage and his zest for work when he was tired out and ready to sink from despair. The inevitable conclusion is that Dickens had entered organically into Gissing's very being and he was aware of this.

It would not be illogical to say that when Gissing began writing, the novel to him was Dickens. From the very beginning, however, his intention was not to imitate Dickens but, as he said in the same essay, 'to follow afar off his example as a writer'. As early as in 1880, he clarified his position in a letter to his brother, saying: 'Certainly I have struck out a path for myself in fiction, for one cannot, of course, compare my methods and aims with those of Dickens.'[2] It is indeed true that Gissing's work in some respect is of a kind essentially opposed to that of Dickens. As *l'enfant terrible*, he wrote in a spirit of antagonism or revolt. He wrote for a few, and believed that the artist has no responsibility save to his artistic conscience. He rebelled against the assumptions that 'disagreeable facts must always be kept out of sight, that human nature must be systematically flattered, that the book must have a "plot", that the story should end on a cheerful note, and all the rest of it.'[3] In all these Gissing differed from Dickens. He acknowledged that Dickens too felt the need of getting to the untouched strata of social life, but he had not the courage to face his subject. Though Gissing did not question Dickens's sincerity of purpose, he was irritated by Dickens's habit of 'tampering with the truth of circumstances that the readers may have joy rather than sorrow.'[4] Gissing thought that Dickens was willing to depict life with faithful realism, but that the desire to entertain and to support a moral view were far stronger motives with him, even if they often led him to falsify realism. Comparing Dickens and Hogarth, he said, Dickens idealizes while Hogarth 'gives us life—and we cannot bear it'. What is true of Hogarth is true of Gissing too. This is Gissing's principal charge against Dickens for Gissing's literary moral was absolute realism. 'Realism, naturalism and so on,' he wrote, 'signified an attitude of revolt against insincerity in the art of fiction.'[5] According to Gissing, Dickens was guilty of this insincerity.

None the less, Dickens proved a formative influence on Gissing. It is obvious that Gissing followed the form used by Dickens, filled his novels with multiplicity of plots and characters, threw together many plots to produce a richness of episode, etc. Dickens always involuntarily guided him in the choice of plot, characters, and situations, though Gissing's treatment and conclusion are always different from Dickens's. Moreover, it may be said that Dickens influenced Gissing considerably in articulating his purpose as a novelist. Critics held that Gissing's choice of the novel was rather casual and arbitrary. George Orwell has vehemently refuted this opinion pointing out that the novel was as natural and befitting a medium for Gissing as for any other novelist.[6] Indeed, Gissing's choice of the novel as a medium was governed by serious intellectual and aesthetic considerations. Above all, the example of Dickens inspired him positively in this respect. We can note an identity of purpose in their avowed tasks as novelists. As his Preface to the 1841 edition of *Oliver Twist* reveals, Dickens too adhered to the principle of the stern and plain truth, and intended to paint 'the cold, wet, shelterless midnight streets of London; the foul and frowsy dens, where vice is closely packed and lacks the room to turn; the haunts of hunger and disease, the shabby rags that scarcely hold together. . . .'[7] Gissing also took a similar oath when he said, 'I mean to bring home to people the ghastly condition (material, mental, moral) of our poor classes, to show the hideous injustice of our whole system of society, to give light on the plan of altering it. . . .'[8]

Gissing began his literary career with about half-a-dozen short stories written in America. These first attempts reveal two influences—of Dickens and of Edgar Allan Poe; the latter was purely temporary in nature. Two stories need to be mentioned here—'Joseph Yates's Temptation' and 'Ten Pounds'. In the first story, Joseph Yates is a poor accountant in the office of Gale & Co. His repeated requests for a rise in remuneration are turned down; neither is he granted any leave. The story shows Yates's family trying to make the best of a penniless Christmas. In 'Ten Pounds', Gissing pleads the case of Staining, a one-time virtuous and rich man, who is convicted for a theft of ten pounds from his employer's office. In these two stories that deal with poverty, Dickens seems to be Gissing's guide and model. Coincidental happenings, strong dramatic situations, acts of philanthrophy, strange rescues, are Dickensian in their nature. Honesty is rewarded in 'Joseph Yates's Temptation'; and though the end of the 'Ten Pounds' is tragic, it suggests a happy change in the hard-hearted Mr. Blendon, the employer of

Staining. Both the stories observe poetic justice in the manner of Dickens.

For Gissing's first published novel *Workers in the Dawn* (1880), which presents a group of young working men striving hard to usher in a new order of society, Dickens's *Oliver Twist* seems to have provided Gissing with the tentative plan. The first part of the novel clearly indicates Gissing's intention to create another Oliver, though a more serious and matured one. Arthur Golding, an orphan child, is first seen in a workhouse. He is cast in a cruel and unfriendly world where misery and crime threaten the integrity and purity of human nature. Rev. Norman, a friend of Arthur's deceased father, rescues the child from London slums and takes him under his care. The child, however, runs away and returns to London where, like Oliver, he has bitter experiences. But his ideal nature cannot be polluted by the filth in which he is forced to live. At last accidentally he meets Mr. Tollady who befriends the lonely lad. Tollady is created in the spirit of Mr. Brownlow. The philanthrophic Helen Norman, the epitome of ideal beauty and venerable sentiments of womanhood, has a family resemblance with Miss Summerson of *Bleak House*. During the first part of the novel, while the main characters are children and much of the action takes place in London slums, a Dickensian atmosphere prevails. Golding as a neglected and wandering waif, a cruel cockney, sprightly lower class characters, Christmas kindness among the poor, all suggest counterparts in Dickens's work. However, as the story progresses, with Golding trying to choose between art and social reform, Helen Norman actively seeking a philosophy of life, and other characters experiencing moral crises, the story moves away from Dickensian manner and becomes more or less autobiographical in its matter. In the course of his unsuccessful search for a meaningful way of life, Golding encounters most of the social remedies of his day but rejects them; he solves the problem of living by committing suicide.

Even in his most un-Dickensian proletarian novel, *The Nether World*, a Dickensian plot provided Gissing with the necessary clues to start his work. The story of *The Old Curiosity Shop* supplies the outline of the main plot for Gissing. We find an exact replica of the sweet relation between Nell and her grandfather in Gissing's little Jane and her grandfather Mr.

Snowdown. The mystery about the hoarded money in both the novels creates troubles and adds to the misery of the innocent beings. Jane Snowdown is a prototype of Dickens's angel-child. Mrs. Peckover and Clem can reasonably be said to have their descent from Dickens's clowns; Pegotty's finding of Emily was in Gissing's mind when he wrote of Hewett's recovery of Clara. Thus Dickens's novels always furnished Gissing with episodes and characters.

Gissing was handicapped by all the prejudices of a cultured man. Unlike Dickens, he lived as an alien among the poor; he did not conceal his fierce hatred of the low and vulgar classes. In *Born in Exile*, Gissing's spokesman Godwin Peak says: 'I hate low, uneducated people. I hate them worse than the filthiest vermin. . . . They ought to be swept off the face of the earth.'[9] He made a harsh clinical study of poverty and attacked the social laws and systems. The common charge, therefore, against Gissing is that, as E. A. Baker says, Gissing 'had no understanding whatever of the subtle self-adaptation of the poorest to what seems an intolerable state of existence, of their invincible vitality and even cheerfulness amid surroundings and privations that appal a man like himself.'[10] While issuing such volleys of damaging charges, critics like Baker and Frank Swinnerton, it is obvious, overlooked Gissing's novel *Thyrza* (1887) which was written in the true spirit of Dickens. Baker has completely ignored *Thyrza*; Frank Swinnerton thought it sufficient to give a mere summary of the novel. This novel proves that Gissing could be Dickens, and sometimes more than Dickens, in his treatment of the underworld. In his later life, Gissing affected to despise this book as a piece of boyish idealism. But he was always greatly pleased by any praise of the study of two sisters, where poverty for once is rainbow-tinged with love.

The story of *Thyrza* is partially Gissing's version of Dickens's *Little Dorrit*; it ends in the unfulfilled dream and pathetic death of the romanticized pretty young working girl of Lambeth. In this novel, as Thomas Seccombe points out, Gissing's 'sympathy is fully as real as that of Dickens, but his fidelity to the fact is greater. Of the Christmas charity prescribed by Dickens, and of the untainted pathos to which he too rarely attained, there is an abundance in *Thyrza*.'[11]

Thyrza captures the poetry of the working-class life. It is full of mirth, humour, song and music—'the music of the obscure ways'. Lambeth working men are neither rebels nor repulsive creatures. For Luke Ackroyd, a young artisan, for example, falling in love is far more important than all the practical and social and religious questions. The mirthfulness of the young Lambeth work-girls—Tatty Nancarrow and her companions—busy with their workshop gossip, gives the lie to the criticism that Gissing always projected on to the nether world his own discontent at having to live grubbily. There are touches of humour and fun in all these small sketches. Tilly Roch, for example, has always her pocket full of sweets which she eats incessantly; Annie West laughs constantly in a shrill note and has occasionally to be called to order; Mrs. Allchin, aged fifteen, has an air of importance for she is happily married. Inexhaustible laughter and constant chatting are the habits of these work-girls. They enjoy their days of freedom and mock at poverty.

Thyrza contains various touching and subtle scenes of the lower class life. Among these, two are most remarkable. In Chapter 34, 'A Loan on Security', the author describes in soft tones the idyllic love between Joseph Bunes and Tatty Nancarrow, and their union. But there is nothing romantic in his treatment of love. Chapter 10 contains a scene in the true nature of Christmas charity, in which Mr. Boddy, Thyrza's grandfather, is given a new overcoat by his grand-daughters to replace the threadbare one. He faces the mirror and tears well up out of joy. The touches of childish naïvté and wonder added to this short bright scene are quite admirable. Yet it is free from the bathos that mars similar scenes in Dickens.

It is indeed true that Gissing was often deaf to the laughter of the poor, and reproved Dickens for his light-hearted attitude towards poverty. But in this novel we find an unconscious identification with Dickens's point of view. In writing this novel, Gissing seems to have been guided by his maturer view of life expressed by Parson Wyvern in *Demos*: 'I believe the happiness assignable to those who are the lowest stratum of civilization is, relatively speaking, no whit less than that we may attribute to the thin stratum of the surface, using the surface to mean the excessively rich. . . . Go along the poorest street in the East End of London, and you will hear as much laughter, witness as much gaiety, as in any thoroughfare of the West....A being of superior intelligence regarding humanity with an eye of perfect understanding would discover that life was enjoyed every bit as much in the slum as in the palace.'[12] *Thyrza* was written immediately after the publication of *Demos*.

Gissing realized, as he pointed out in *Immortal Dickens*, that a novelist of the poor must possess the essential Dickensian qualities of sympathy and a sense of identity. At the same time he was overwhelmed by the harsh realities of life, the cruelty of the social laws, and the impossibilities of reform; he consequently concentrated more on them in painting a world that was blind to poetic justice, sentiments, humour, and innocent happiness. The ruthless reality of Hogarthian painting, the brutality of a Zolaesque picture, and the burning indignation of a Hebrew prophet—these are the strongest elements in Gissing's panoramic study of the lower depths of London. Finally, is it because of his growing awareness of the un-Dickensian qualities in him that he shifted after 1886 his locale of study to the middle classes and then narrowed it down to the study of the artist-hero and the outsider problem?

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EMILY DICKINSON AND THANATOPHOBIA

BY M. Q. TOWHEED

EMILY DICKINSON's poems on the sempiternal theme of death form a well-knit unit showing a patterned development. As a poet she grows with years and her attitude towards death also responds to the dynamics of change. Initially baffled by the great striking power of death, she is a victim of thanatophobia and is almost overwhelmed by death-rejection impulses. This period extends from the beginning of her poetic career to the year 1861. Thereafter, in the middle period—from 1862 to 1866—her vision is bisected and her thinking is held in precarious balance between death-rejection and death-acceptance impulses. In the last phase of her poetic career, that is, from the year 1867 to 1886, she capitulates, gives up her struggle, and accepts death boldly and gracefully.

Emily Dickinson's earliest encounter with death, which left a traumatic effect on her, was at the age of fourteen when she watched the death of her friend Sophia Holland, daughter of Seneca Holland of Amherst, on 29 April 1844. She recollected her experiences in March 1846 in a letter to friend Abiah Root:

> I have never lost but one friend near my age and with whom my thoughts and her (*sic*) were the same. It was before you came to Amherst. My friend was Sophia Holland. She was too lovely for earth and she was transplanted from earth to heaven. I visited her often in sickness and watched over her bed. But at length reason fled and the physician forbid any but the nurse to go into her room. Then it seemed to me I should die too if I could not be permitted to watch over her or even to look at her face. At length the doctor said she must die and allowed me to look at her a moment through the open door. I took off my shoes and stole softly to the sick room.
>
> There she lay mild and beautiful as in health, and her pale features lit up with an unearthly smile.
>
> I looked as long as friends would permit and when they told me I must look no longer I let them lead me away. I

> shed no tear, for my heart was too full to weep, but after she was laid in coffin and I could not call her back again I gave way to a fixed melancholy.
>
> I told no one the cause of my grief, though it was gnawing at my very heart strings.[1]

The death of Sophia Holland and subsequently the deaths of her teachers Leonard Humphrey in 1850 and Ben Newton in 1853 intensified the indwelling fear of death in Emily Dickinson. In a letter written to Abiah Root, a few months before Sophia Holland's death, she had confided:

> Does not Eternity appear dreadful to you....I cannot imagine with the farthest stretch of my imagination my own death scene—It does not seem to me that I shall ever close my eyes in death.[2]

Her dread of mortality was further intensified when she refused to formally profess the faith of her ancestors and questioned the reality of the hereafter as enunciated by the priests. She could not, however, escape the sense of guilt that followed this refusal. She considered herself a sinner doomed to eternal damnation. Death assumed a dreadful aspect before her, because with it she associated the concepts of resurrection, eternity, heaven and hell about which she was sceptical. She also feared God because He reminded her of death. In one of her early letters to Abiah Root, she made the following ironical remark:

> God is sitting here, looking into my very soul to see if I think right tho'ts. ...He looks very gloriously, and everything bright seems dull beside him, and I don't dare look directly at him for fear I shall die.[3]

Her Puritan heritage had impressed upon her that an angry God can bring disasters and no disaster can be greater than death. Frederick J. Hoffman says, 'Disasters are signs of God's anger; He will prove man's mortality by destroying his life.'[4] This is precisely the idea that informs her two early poems 'I never lost as much but twice' where she employs the epithets 'Burgler! Banker-Father' for God, and 'Papa above!' where man is reduced to the stature of a 'Mouse' overpowered by the 'Cat'—a metaphor for God.

The overall picture of death that crystallized into Emily Dickinson's mind in the early period was of a tyrant, an annihilator, and a destroyer who could mercilessly ambush an unsuspecting human any moment. In the face of the omnipresence of death in the visible world, she had to be concerned about the impending loss of things dear to her. Mention may be made of her poems 'All these my banners be,' where she expresses her fear of the possible loss of 'May pageantry'; 'I had a guinea golden,' where her concern is directed towards the loss of 'guinea golden', 'a crimson Robin', 'a star in heaven', and a wandering 'Pleiad'; 'I should not dare to leave my friend,' where she lacks courage to leave her friend behind lest death claimed him in her absence; and 'If He *dissolve*—then—there is nothing—more—,' where she employs cosmic as well as Christian imagery like 'Eclipse—at Midnight—', 'Sunset—at—Easter', and 'Blindness—on the Dawn—', to convey her fear of the dissolution of the lover. These poems are typical examples of the poet's thanatophobia which in its plenitude transformed her fear to a neurosis.

Emily Dickinson's fear of loss through death was psychogenic. At least three factors might be attributed to show the basis of this fear. First, she was afraid of the metamorphosis of the body after death. Second, she dreaded the loneliness of the dead. Third, she did not know the final destination of the departed. Regarding the first two, Clark Griffith says, 'change in all forms repelled her; hence death, the ultimate in change, had to strike her as an essentially abhorrent prospect.'[5] She associated metamorphosis of the quick into dead with ugliness, deformity, decay and maggotry which belied all hopes of resurrection of the body. Death, to her, was a signal to pulverizing agents to be active. This might account for the use of the images of wolf, owl, serpent, vulture and other beasts in an early sentimental poem 'Through lane it lay—through bramble—.' This poem also demonstrates Emily Dickinson's fear of loneliness that death bestows upon a person. She uses the neuter 'it' for the dead to denote their otherness. Removed from any social contact, they lie cold and static, as *persona non grata.* Regarding the third factor, we may say that Emily Dickinson was always in doubt about immortality despite her Puritan background. She fondly longed for the knowledge of the fate of the departed:

If those I loved were found
The bells of Ghent would ring—

She could, however, get no evidence or sign to allay her doubts. She associated herself with the image of a little boat hazardously buffeting against the defiantly perilous waves of a mysterious sea as in the poem 'A little boat adrift!' To unravel the mystery of the drama of life, death, and immortality, was beyond her power. Her doubts get final articulation in the last line of another 'little boat' poem ''Twas such a little, little boat':

My little craft was lost!

Death is the finale of the drama of existence and one should not hope for resurrection.

Emily Dickinson was a poet of paradoxes. The more she tried to evade the issue of death, the more she got entangled in it. She clutched at images, tropes, and metaphors to define it but was repulsed by its nebulousness. It is rather difficult for anyone to define death for the ostensible reason that the experiences of death cannot be shared. One can only comprehend it in terms of the dissolution of certain objects. Emily Dickinson did so in terms of the dissolution of some live object, whether a human being, a beast, an insect, a day, or a clock. In consequence, however, she got nothing but appalling experiences of fear, frustration, and despair. Even in external events, she saw signs and symbols of destructive power which annihilated human life as well as human values. Here is a well-known poem:

There's a certain Slant of light,
Winter afternoons—
That oppresses, like the Heft
Of Cathedral Tunes—

Heavenly Hurt, it gives us—
We can find no scar,
But internal difference,
Where the Meanings, are—

None may teach it—Any—
'Tis the Seal Despair—
An imperial affliction
Sent us of the Air—

When it comes, the Landscape listens—
Shadows—hold their breath—
When it goes, 'tis like the Distance
On the look of Death—

The speaker is contemplating the dying day and the death-like season, both of which remind her of ultimate extinction. Every aspect of the poem—syntax, symbolism, and description—suggests that in Emily Dickinson's mind even non-human objects conspire against human beings. She considers human life precariously poised on the brink of extinction. In the poem she takes a very minute object—'a certain Slant of Light' from 'Winter afternoons'—and says that it 'oppresses' and imparts 'imperial affliction'. To her mind the slanting winter light is only an image of despair, because it encompasses within it trenchant obliquity symbolizing decay and death. By resorting to the technique of obliquity and indirection, and by harnessing multiple images compounded from nature, Church, and the firmament, she projects her fear of death and the consequent despair. The images keep on fusing into each other, thus recognizing the ubiquity and irrevocability of death.

For Emily Dickinson, one of the ways of comprehending death was to equate it with time. Death is a passage out of the temporal and the passage is achieved through the process of intense pain. This is what informs the following poem:

A Clock stopped—
Not the Mantel's—
Geneva's farthest skill
Can't put the puppet bowing—
That just now dangled still—

An awe came on the Trinket!
The Figures hunched, with pain—
Then quivered out of Decimals—
Into Degreeless Noon—

It will not stir for Doctors—
This Pendulum of snow—
This Shopman importunes it—
While cool—Concernless No—

Nods from the Gilded pointers—
Nods from the Seconds slim—
Decades of Arrogance between
The Dial life—
And Him—

In the poem physical cessation of life has been translated into the image of a clock which has stopped. So the clock is a metaphor which objectifies man's bondage to time. This is made clear in the first two lines: 'A Clock stopped—/Not the Mantel's—.' It is about a different clock the poet is talking. If this clock is the objectification of man, his position then is like a 'Pendulum' which sways back and forth on the lower edge of the 'Dial'. Man is also present as a 'Dial' bound by the calibrations of time which is controlled by a superior power. Hence he is a 'Trinket,' a 'Puppet'. The first stanza is a metaphorical description of the moment of death. Contemplation of the moment of death forces the poet's imagination to think of the moment before death in the second stanza where we have all the horror, pain, and agony associated with dying. Death is a total stasis. This is achieved only by passing through the dynamic excursions of physical pain. The stasis of death is further emphasized in the third stanza. Once the clock has stopped, it cannot be put back to motion even by the best 'Doctors'—maybe, not even by God, the Supreme Doctor. If so, the remark becomes ironical, even blasphemous. God the life-giver cannot be the life-restorer. We might take it as a fling at the entire theory of resurrection which forms one of the bases of Christian belief. In death, man is a static frozen mass of flesh. Towards the end of the third stanza and in the fourth, the motionless figures are animated only to utter 'Concernless No' to the importunities of the 'Doctors'/'Shopman' because they are actually dead. The 'Gilded pointers' and the 'Seconds slim' only emphasize the negation of life. Since the clock of life has stopped, time should be reckoned by 'Decades of Arrogance'. 'Arrogance' stands for distance between life and death.

When Emily Dickinson finally succumbs to the fear of death, she rises to great poetic height as in this well-known poem:

I felt a Funeral, in my Brain,
And Mourners to and fro
Kept treading—treading—till it seemed
That Sense was breaking through—

And when they all were seated,
A service, like a Drum—
Kept beating—beating—till I thought
My Mind was going numb—

And then I heard them lift a Box
And creak across my Soul
With those same Boots of Lead, again,
Then Space—began to toll,

And all the Heavens were a Bell,
And Being, but an Ear,
And I, and silence, some strange Race,
Wrecked, solitary, here

And then a Plank in Reason broke,
And I dropped down, and down—
And hit a World, at every plunge,
And Finished Knowing—then—

The fear, mystery, and unpredictability of death had permeated the poet's psyche so deeply that here she contemplates her own death and records the sensations of the last receding consciousness in a language that produces dizziness in the reader. Throughout the poem, the emphasis is on funeral ritual which serves to objectify her inner grief. Hence fear and grief run contrapuntally in the poem. At the outset, the word 'Funeral' has the properties of a metaphor indicating that it is not an actual but a psychic funeral. Later the metaphor serves the purpose of being the centre of controlling and channelizing the images that follow. On the whole there is practically no deviation from the ambit of the images suggested by 'Funeral'. We have 'Mourners', 'Service', the coffin 'Box', the movement of the people toward the grave and the silence following the burial. But down the visible surface, the experience described is how the sense breaks in the appalling presence of death. It is the 'sense' that goes 'numb'; it is across the 'Soul' that the creaking sound is heard, and it is the 'Plank in Reason' that gives way. The poem distinguishes itself because of the artistic synthesis of multiple images, symbolic utterances, intermixture of alternating consonant and vowel sounds and meaningful use of refrains.

Emily Dickinson's capitulation to thanatophobia in the early period was total and complete. In time this became responsible for giving her that tragic vision through which she saw signs of evanescence in everything beautiful, be it a human form, a flower, a bee, a bird, a rainbow or a year. No wonder she called herself the 'Queen of Calvary'. In giving poetic utterance to her fear of death, she is whimsically playful, seraphically innocent, irreverently devotional, and ends up on a note of dilemma —whether to accept the world or reject it. The core of her poetry lies in this ambivalence which gets full articulation in the poetry of the middle period.

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THE CASE FOR REALISM IN HENRY JAMES'S 'THE ART OF FICTION'

By R. K. Kaul

Mr Leon Edel in his introduction to *The Future of the Novel* squarely places Henry James as a critic in the camp of the realists. James was, according to Edel:

> a writer wholly on the side of verisimilitude. Not only was he a confirmed realist who considered allegory an inferior form of writing...but also he devoted himself to devising methods by which the narrative technique itself could add further dimensions of reality to his story-telling.[1]

Presumably Henry James's contributions to the narrative technique, such as 'the point of view', arise from the realistic doctrine. In the third volume of his authoritative biography of Henry James Mr Edel asserts, 'never had the case for realism in fiction, for the novel as social history been put in the English world with such force.'[2]

Mr Edel does not offer any definition of realism. He assumes that the reader understands what the term means in critical usage. From Eric Auerbach's *Mimesis*[3] it is possible to extract certain criteria of realism in Western literature. They may be summarized as:

1. the representation of the visible, the palpable, the perceptible through the senses;
2. a mixing of the heroic and the everyday, the sublime and the practical in subject matter and style;
3. a portrayal of the intermediate stratum of life in a serious manner;
4. the presentation of character in a social and political setting.

Assuming that Mr Auerbach's characterizing of realism is acceptable, it is proposed to examine whether James as a critic was a realist.

I wish to concede at the very outset that James not only devised methods by which the narrative technique could add further dimensions of reality but in his criticism exhibited unconcealed distrust of any novelist who adopted unrealistic conventions such as direct address to the reader. At one place the language of James's 'The Art of Fiction' lends itself to the interpretation of realism as 'illusionism' ('the use of pictorial techniques such as perspective and foreshortening to deceive the eye. . .into taking that which is painted for that which is real'[4]). For example while deploring that fiction still has to masquerade as 'make believe' in order to find acceptance, James condemns certain distinguished novelists for conceding the imaginary nature of the incidents in their novels:

> Certain accomplished novelists have a habit of giving themselves away which must often bring tears to the eyes of people who take their function seriously. I was lately struck, in reading over many pages of Anthony Trollope, with his want of discretion in this particular. In a digression, a parenthesis or an aside, he concedes to the reader that he and this trusting friend are only 'making believe'. He admits that the events he narrates have not really happened. . . .[5]

James objects to interpolations in the form of direct address by the novelist to his readers on the ground that such interpolations break the illusion of reality.

This criticism rests on the assumption that the novelist seeks to create in his work the illusion of reality. According to this doctrine the reader while reading the novel mistakes fiction for reality. We know the lengths to which the exponents of doctrinaire realism went in the neo-classical era. What they asserted about the nature of dramatic illusion appears to have been asserted by Henry James about fiction.

Mrs Kathleen Tillotson in her address, 'The Tale and the Teller', traces this doctrine back to the later Jacobean period. She points out the inaptness of transferring certain canons of criticism from the drama to fiction:

> When the critic objects that the author's voice 'destroys

> the illusion', it is surely dramatic rather than narrative illusion that he has in mind.[6]

But the scope of Mrs Tillotson's remarks could be extended to show that in drama no less than in fiction the attempt to create the illusion of reality is a heresy. We know that the soliloquy and the aside, to mention only two examples, are incompatible with illusionist assumptions about the nature of drama. We need scarcely to be reminded that the spectators are always in their senses and know that the stage is only a stage.[7]

We might excuse James's overstatement of the realist position if we could ascribe it to mere irritation with Trollope's amateurishness. But this passage occurs in the course of a more ambitious claim on behalf of fiction, namely that 'the novel is history', a claim made by Henry Fielding long before. James not only effaces Aristotle's well-recognized distinction between history and fiction, he goes on to develop the comparison:

> The subject-matter of fiction is stored up likewise in documents and records, and if it will not give itself away...it must speak with assurance, with the tone of historian.[8]

This, like the illusionist assumption discussed earlier, must be rejected as a lapse. Henry James would scarcely have felt flattered that his contemporary H. G. Wells made exactly similar statements. 'A novel,' he claimed, 'is a story that demands, or professes to demand, no make believe.' Again in an equally simplistic vein he asserts, 'The novelist undertakes to present you people and things as real as any that you can meet in an omnibus.'[9]

In an attempt to defend fiction against the charge of levity they go to the extreme of claiming that their art is like that of Gibbon and Macaulay. That is tantamount to saying that fiction is not fictitious.

Having disposed of these two over-statements which will not bear much critical examination, we may now proceed to examine the question: is 'The Art of Fiction' a statement of realism? In a passage most frequently quoted from the essay James asserts 'the importance of exactness—the truth of detail

. . . the air of reality (solidity of specification)'. That seemed to him:

> to be the supreme virtue of a novel—the merit on which all its other merits . . . helplessly and submissively depend. If it be not there they are all as nothing, and if these be there, they owe their effect to the success with which the author has produced the illusion of life.[10]

This is a formula for writing Defoe's kind of fiction. It describes the pseudo-journalism of *A Journal of the Plague Year* rather than the imaginative writings of George Eliot and Turgenev which James admired.

These excesses of the realistic doctrine were provoked in part by the lapses of some of the practising novelists of his own time. The failure of the Victorian novelists to present, for example, a forthright handling of the man-woman relationship was condemned by James on realistic grounds. This prudery was by no means confined to the British Isles. The situation in contemporary America was worse. William Dean Howells prided himself on the fact that contemporary American novelists concerned themselves with the more smiling aspects of life.[11] He approved of the exclusion of the seamy side of life from American (and British) fiction. James objected to such narrowing 'selection' by Anglo-Saxon novelists: 'Art is essentially selection, but it is a selection whose main care is to be typical, to be inclusive.'[12] James, who at this time was close to the French masters of fiction, claimed that the disagreeable and the ugly were not to be excluded from the domain of art. He deprecated the moral timidity of 'the usual English novelist.'[13]

But because James objected to a prudish distortion of experience in English fiction it should not be concluded that his critical position was that of an unqualified or naive realist. Mr James E. Miller (Jr.) is quite right in pointing out the supreme importance of the writer's imagination in James's view of the art of fiction:

> It may well be that this conception of the mysteriously operating imagination, on both conscious and unconscious levels, was what separated James from the other realists of

> his time. Whereas they tended to locate the criteria for realism in an apprehendable reality in experience or life itself, James tended to locate the criteria inside the author or artist, and in what the crucible of the imagination did to or for the materials gathered from experience and life.[14]

If we place James's 'The Art of Fiction' in its historical context we shall find that it adopts a position midway between two extremes. The two extreme positions were stated by two popular practitioners of fiction, both of them close friends of James. Although W. D. Howells and R. L. Stevenson stated their respective positions in essays which were published somewhat later than James's 'The Art of Fiction' (1884), James appears to anticipate the objections that Howells and Stevenson were to air.

Howells in *Criticism and Fiction* (1891) reacted so vehemently against the aesthetic point of view as to hold up the *Personal Memoirs* of General Ulysses Grant as an example to the writers. Even while expressing his admiration for *The Tragic Muse* of Henry James, he condemned the novelists who told a story for the story's sake: 'To spin a yarn for the yarn's sake, that is an ideal worthy of a nineteenth-century Englishman.'[15] He wished to efface the traditionally recognized distinction between literature and life: 'It is the conception of literature as something apart from life, superfinely aloof, which makes it really unimportant to the great mass of mankind.'[16] He sought to widen the definition of realism so as to include the lower classes as the object of the novelist's portrayal.

R. L. Stevenson, on the contrary, contended in 'A Humble Remonstrance' that:

> Man's one method...is to half-shut his eyes against the dazzle and confusion of reality. ...Literature, above all in its most typical mood, the mood of narrative, similarly feels the direct challenge and pursues instead an independent and creative aim.[17]

Stevenson emphasized the contrast between life and art:

> Life is monstrous, infinite, illogical, abrupt and poignant;

> a work of art, in comparison, is neat, finite, self-contained, rational, flowing and emasculate.[18]

Stevenson went to the extent of saying that a work of art, like a proposition of geometry, is 'untrue to the crude fact'.[19] Neither of them in his view represents nature, though they both inhere in it.

James on the one hand sets out to defend the barrier that separates literature from life, on the other hand he accepts the mimetic view of literature. Fiction, he claimed, is an 'art which undertakes so immediately to reproduce life.'[20] It has, according to him, 'an immense and exquisite correspondence with life.'[21] But correspondence is not identity. Throughout the essay James insists on the correspondence without asserting the identity. Even though he fought shy of aestheticism (witness Gabriel Nash in *The Tragic Muse*) he did insist that the search for form was a legitimate end for a novelist to pursue. He asserted that 'questions of art are questions...of execution.'[22] The critic has no business to question the novelist about the suitability of the subject-matter: 'We must grant the artist his subject, his idea, his *donnée*: our criticism is applied only to what he makes of it.'[23]

James's essay was originally a rejoinder to Besant's lecture on the 'Art of Fiction'.[24] Apart from disapproving of the prescriptive manner in which Besant laid down the 'general laws' of novel writing, James felt that Besant's interpretation of realism was too narrow. In the course of defining the nature of realism in fiction Besant had asserted that 'invention' was worthless, that value belonged to personal experience and observation and finally that in 'modern' fiction 'the characters must be real and such as might be met with in actual life.'[25]

There was not enough allowance made for the diversity of manner in which different novelists presented their rendering of reality. While granting that direct experience or 'impression', to use his favourite word, is the only solid basis of art, especially the art of fiction, he insisted that:

> Experience is never limited, and it is never complete; it is an immense sensibility, a kind of huge spider web of the finest silken threads suspended in the chamber of consciousness, and catching every air-borne particle in its

> tissue. It is the very atmosphere of the mind; and when the mind is imaginative—much more when it happens to be that of a man of genius—it takes to itself the faintest hints of life, it converts the very pulses of the air into revelations.[26]

It will be noticed in the above passage how the stress is shifted from the perception to the percipient. Whereas the word 'experience' traditionally emphasizes the objective character of the external world, the scientific nature of the sense data, the word 'sensibility' emphasizes the subjective nature of the artist's response to the external world. From 'sensibility' to 'consciousness', 'the atmosphere of the mind', 'the imaginative mind', 'the mind of a genius', and finally to 'revelations' is a very big leap indeed.

We have already been warned that 'the measure of reality is very difficult to fix' and that reality is 'colored by the author's vision'.[27] But James goes on thereafter to illustrate his point by referring to 'an English novelist, a woman of genius'[28] who wrote tales about 'the nature and way of life of the French Protestant youth'. The empirical basis of her tales was flimsy indeed. She *once* overheard conversation in the household of a clergyman as she ascended a staircase. James formulates a general principle from this example:

> The power to guess the unseen from the seen, to trace the implication of things, to judge the whole piece by the pattern...this cluster of gifts may almost be said to constitute experience.[29]

James thereby refutes the 'law' enunciated by Besant that 'a young lady brought up in a quiet country village should avoid descriptions of garrison life.'[30]

In the rest of the essay James maintains a delicate balance between the mimetic and the symbolist points of view. He talks continually of 'the sense of reality' (p. 12). He soon makes it clear, however, that 'the air of reality' (p. 14) is not to be created by photographic realism but by trying to 'catch the color of life itself' (p. 27) and even more explicitly 'the very note and trick, the strange irregular rhythm of life' (pp. 19-20).

There is implied the claim that the artist makes life more meaningful than he finds it, anticipating the observation he was to make in a letter to H. G. Wells that:

> It is art that *makes* life, makes interest, makes importance, for our consideration and application of these things, and I know of no substitute whatever for the force and beauty of its process.[31]

In 'The Art of Fiction' he verges on the point of saying that the artist idealizes his material drawn from impressions or experiences. He steers away from any suggestion that art is autonomous as his friend Stevenson maintained:

> The whole secret is that no art does 'compete with life'. . . . A proposition of geometry does not compete with life, and a proposition of geometry is a fair and luminous parallel for a work of art. Both are reasonable, both untrue to the crude fact; both inhere in nature; neither represents it.[32]

The novelist, in James's view, does compete with life:

> It is here in very truth that he competes with life, it is here that he competes with life; it is here that he competes with his brother the painter in *his* attempt to render the look of things, the look that conveys their meaning, to catch the color, the relief, the expression, the surface, the substance of the human spectacle.[33]

A novel, according to James, must have a 'life' of its own, independent of life outside:

> A novel is a living thing, all one and continuous, like any other organism, and in proportion as it lives will it be found, I think, that in each of its parts there is something of each of the other parts.[34]

Thus we see that James states the organic view of art. Although this statement was occasioned by Besant's naive talk of the novel of incident and the novel of character, of the untenable distinction between a novel and a romance (a distinction which Dean Howells was to insist upon),[35] the implications of this statement are much wider. 'The story and the novel, the idea and the form, are the needle and the thread.' We cannot legitimately talk of 'the story' as though it were detachable from the non-narrative aspect of the novel:

> This sense of the story being the idea, the starting-point, of the novel, is the only one that I see in which it can be spoken of as something different from its organic whole; and since in proportion as the work is successful the idea permeates and penetrates it, informs and animates it...in that proportion do we lose our sense of the story being a blade which may be drawn more or less out of its sheath.[36]

In claiming that the novel is organic James is claiming that it has laws of its own growth. But he is not claiming that the novel is like a proposition of geometry. It is assumed that the laws of its growth are parallel to the laws that determine the growth of life. Art, according to him, competes with life without trespassing upon it.

In 'The Lesson of Balzac' (1905) James made a suggestive comparison. While the novelist's consciousness is compared with a mirror, between the mirror and the object reflected is the atmosphere that colours the reflection of the object. This colour of the air is what James calls 'the projected light of the individual strong temperament'.[37]

On the one hand he insists on the representational character of fiction:

> The most fundamental and general sign of the novel...is its being everywhere an effort at *representation*—this is the beginning and end of it. ...[38]

On the other hand he insists on the transforming role of the novelist. He contrasts the achievement of Balzac's *Comédie Humaine* with that of Zola's *Rougon-Macquart* series and ascribes Balzac's superiority to the fact that:

> The mystic process of the crucible, the transformation of the material under aesthetic heat, is, in the *Comédie Humaine*,

> thanks to an intenser and more submissive fusion, completer, and also finer.[39]

The views stated in 'The Art of Fiction' can be related to the theory of fiction that James was to enunciate in the prefaces to the New York edition of his novels and tales. It will be remembered that the two poles of his aesthetic theory are 'impression' and 'imagination'. On the one hand nobody can hope to write a novel without founding it on his 'impressions', i.e. accurate observation and experience. On the other hand no novel worth reading is written by a writer whose imagination cannot transmute these impressions into an aesthetic pattern. These ideas are adumbrated in 'The Art of Fiction'. While he defines a novel as 'a direct impression of life' he concedes to the novelist 'the power to guess the unseen from the seen'.

In the Preface to *What Maisie Knew* he was to compare the given facts with the acorn and his own novel to the great oak. The origin of the novel was as follows:

> The accidental mention had been made to me of the manner in which the situation of some luckless child of a divorced couple was affected, under my informant's eyes, by the remarriage of one of its parents.

Jame's fancy was touched by the situation. The given situation, however, was no more than a provocation to James's narrative imagination:

> I recollect, however, promptly thinking that for a proper symmetry the second parent should marry too.[40]

The charm of the story, however, does not lie in the mere geometrical patterning of narrative. Rather it lies in the uncorrupted (and incorruptible) consciousness of the little girl who is a witness to so much corruption in her parents. This was James's own contribution to the story.

It should perhaps be noted that the account of how the later novels and tales of James were composed does not necessarily illustrate the view he stated in 'The Art of Fiction'. In the later stages of his development as a novelist he had moved far from historical documents and records referred to earlier in this essay. Towards the end of his career, when he wrote the Preface to *The Golden Bowl* he pointed out that the antique dealer's shop from where the bowl was bought:

> was but a shop of the mind, of the author's projected world, in which objects are primarily related to each other, and therefore not 'taken from' a particular establishment anywhere, only an image distilled and intensified, as it were, from a drop of the essence of such establishments in general.[41]

There are two significant points made in this passage. In the author's 'projected world', i.e. the world of the novel presented by the author, the objects are primarily related to each other and not to the external world. A work of art is to be judged by its inner logic. This gets perilously close to Stevenson's comparison of art to geometry. But James modifies the absolute autonomy of art by adding that 'the shop of the mind' is itself distilled from the essence of such establishments in general. Art then does have a reference to life but James has moved far from the claim that fiction and history are identical in nature.

It would scarcely have been possible to maintain the simplistic realism of some of the passages of 'The Art of Fiction' after he had composed such novels as *The Wings of the Dove* and *The Sacred Fount*. Judged by the criteria of Auerbach, quoted earlier in this essay, these works cannot be called realistic. Most of the character portrayal is internalized, there is an exclusion of the low and vulgar, both in subject-matter and style, and finally the characters are not rooted in the economic or political life of their time (as they are in, for example, *The Princess Cassamassima*).

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. New York, 1956, pp. xi-xii. [Note: all quotations from James's 'Art of Fiction' are taken from this edition. The page numbers refer to this edition.]
2. See *The Middle Years, 1882-1895* (Philadelphia, 1962), p. 123.
3. Trans. W. R. Trask (Princeton, 1946), 1968.
4. See *The Oxford Companion to Art* (Oxford, 1970).
5. *The Future of the Novel*, p. 6.

6. *Mid-Victorian Studies* (London, 1965), p. 7.
7. See *Johnson on Shakespeare*, ed. W. K. Wimsatt (Jr.) (London, 1960), p. 38.
8. *The Future of the Novel*, p. 6.
9. *Henry James and H. G. Wells*, ed. L. Edel and G. N. Ray (London, 1958), p. 143.
10. *The Future of the Novel*, pp. 13-4.
11. See *Criticism and Fiction*, ed. Kirk and Kirk (New York, 1959), p. 62.
12. *The Future of the Novel*, p. 20.
13. Ibid. p. 25.
14. *Theory of Fiction: Henry James* (Lincoln, 1972), p. 5.
15. Kirk and Kirk, p. 57.
16. Ibid. p. 49.
17. See 'Miscellanies', *The Works of R. L. Stevenson* (Edinburgh, 1894), I, p. 272.
18. Ibid. I, p. 273.
19. Ibid. I, p. 274.
20. *The Future of the Novel*, p. 9.
21. Ibid. p. 23.
22. Ibid. pp. 24-5.
23. Ibid. p. 17.
24. According to Mr John Goode, Besant's lecture 'represents the point of view of a novelist who made a stand against the prevailing self-awareness which was common (for all their differences) to Gissing, Moore and Hardy as well as to James.' See 'The Art of Fiction: Walter Besant and Henry James', *Tradition and Tolerance in 19th-Century Fiction* (London, 1966), p. 245.
25. Walter Besant, *The Art of Fiction* (Boston, 1885), pp. 17-8.
26. *The Future of the Novel*, p. 12.
27. Ibid. p. 12.
28. Anne Thackeray, Lady Ritchie (?)
29. *The Future of the Novel*, p. 13.
30. Ibid. p. 11.
31. 10 July 1915. See *Henry James and H. G. Wells*, ed. Edel and Ray (London, 1958), p. 267.
32. *The Works of R. L. Stevenson*, I, pp. 273-4.
33. *The Future of the Novel*, p. 14.
34. Ibid. p. 15.
35. Vide: 'No one knows better than Mr James knows the radical difference between a romance and a novel but he speaks now of Hawthorne's novels and now of his romances, throughout, as if the terms were convertible.... Mr James excepts to the people in *The Scarlet Letter*, because they are rather types than persons, rather conditions of the mind than characters; as if it were not precisely the business of the romance to deal with types and mental conditions.' Kirk and Kirk, p. 234.
36. *The Future of the Novel*, p. 21.
37. Ibid. p. 108.
38. Ibid. p. 114.
39. Ibid. p. 114.
40. *The Art of the Novel*, ed. R. P. Blackmur (New York, 1962), p. 140.
41. Ibid. p. 334.

JAMES JOYCE: THE CRUCIAL DATE IN HIS LITERARY CAREER

A NOTE

BY V. D. SINGH

JAMES JOYCE'S *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* ends with the appended entry 'Dublin, 1904. /Trieste, 1914'. The dates do not refer exclusively to the period of the writing of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* but also include the earlier drafts. In 1904 Joyce wrote a long sketch 'A Portrait of the Artist'[1] for a Dublin journal,[2] but it was rejected for its obscurity. Then Joyce undertook the writing of the long autobiographical novel *Stephen Hero*.[3] Unfortunately, the book ran down unfinished because of Joyce's extreme dissatisfaction with the mode of its narrative. Having rejected *Stephen Hero*, Joyce decided to rewrite the Portrait, and the finished product of this effort is available to us in the form of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.*

Joyce is well known for his experimentation and technical innovation which occupied his mind throughout his career. But the period 1904 to 1914 is of special importance. It was during this period that he struggled to evolve for himself a mode of narrative that suited his aesthetic purpose best. Thus, from the conventional omniscient-author-derived narrative of *Stephen Hero*, he moved on to the oblique narrative embedded with reported interior monologue used in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and the long story *The Dead.*

Unfortunately, critics do not appear to be very clear about the various stages of Joyce's development, nor have many of them been able to identify the turning point in the career of the young artist. Joyce's rejection of *Stephen Hero* marks not only the culmination of his dissatisfaction[4] with the discursive type of narrative, but it also marks the point in his career when he discovered the mature artist in him who created *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and was later to write *Ulysses*. Thus, the date of Joyce's rejection of *Stephen Hero* should be regarded as a significant landmark in his progress to maturity, and the period of its writing, the most crucial period of his literary development.

Various dates have been ascribed to *Stephen Hero*. Theodore Spencer, the famous editor of the manuscript, admits the 'confusion'[5] and after citing reliable source 'reconciles' the discrepancy between different dates by concluding 'then we can think of the manuscript as representing the work of the year 1901 to 1906.'[6] Both Spencer and the source he relies on, i.e. Gorman, the biographer of Joyce, have mistaken the references to the first draft 'A Portrait of the Artist' for the early chapters of *Stephen Hero*. The draft sketch was written in 1904, and there is no support for the conclusion that *Stephen Hero* belongs to a date earlier than 1904.[7]

It is surprising that a well known critic like Prescott, writing as late as in 1964, has, to the neglect of corrected information available, uncritically accepted Spencer's conclusion.[8] Marvin Magalaner, in his book specially dealing with this period—'the time of apprenticeship' (published in 1959), very vaguely says, 'Joyce presented sections of his autobiographical novel to John Eglinton, the editor of *Dana*,' and goes on to quote from Gorman's book Eglinton's account of the incident (how he rejected Joyce's 'A Portrait of the Artist'), without saying a word as to which autobiographical novel and what particular section he had in mind.[9] Another critic (R. S. Ryf in *A New Approach to Joyce* which closely studies *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* as the guide-book or the central point of reference to Joyce's writings) does not think that precise dating is essential and says:

> The prose antecedent to the *Portrait* is the *Stephen Hero* manuscript, whose date or dates of composition cannot be definitely determined. Precise dating is not essential for our purpose, and it may be assumed that the work was in various stages of progress, either in Joyce's mind or on paper, between 1901 and 1906, with most of the writing having been done in 1904.[10]

Apart from the extreme ambiguity of 'various stages of progress' the conclusions arrived at by Ryf that most of the writing was done in 1904 (the year Joyce left Ireland for good), can be very misleading to anyone concerned with a precise chronology of the evolution of Joyce's mind and art.

However, more authentic and carefully verified details are available in Richard Ellmann's *James Joyce*, first published in 1959. He gives a detailed account of Joyce's life and his writings during the years under discussion here, in the chapters pertaining to these years.

In his diary entry for 2 February 1904 (James Joyce's twenty-second birthday) his brother Stanislaus wrote after commenting on Joyce's reaction to John Eglinton's rejection of his sketch (paper):

> Jim is beginning his novel, as he usually begins things, half in anger, to show that in writing about himself he has a subject of more interest than their aimless discussion. I suggested the title of the paper 'A Portrait of the Artist' and this evening, sitting in the kitchen, Jim told me his idea for the novel. . . . He has not decided on a title, and again I made most of the suggestions. Finally a title of mine was accepted: 'Stephen Hero' from Jim's own name in the book 'Stephen Dedalus'. The title, like the book, is satirical.[11]

This explains the origin of *Stephen Hero*. Joyce had planned a novel of sixty-three chapters. In his letter to his brother written from Zurich on 19 November 1904 he wrote that he was writing the eleventh chapter of *Stephen Hero* about his days at Belvedere. In February 1905, he got on to chapters 17 and 18 depicting Stephen with his friends at the university. The surviving manuscript begins in the middle of chapter 15. By 7 June 1905 Joyce had written twenty-one chapters of the novel. At this time Joyce was passing through anxious and uncertain days in Trieste. The writing of *Stephen Hero* ran down unfinished a little after chapter 25. The manuscript ends with the unfinished chapter 26. It would therefore be clear that *Stephen Hero* is the result of Joyce's work between the years 1904 and 1906.

On 6 September 1907 Joyce completed his long story *The Dead*. He had already decided to rewrite 'Stephen Hero' completely and by the middle of 1908 he had finished more than half of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.[12]

To conclude, it can be said that the years 1904 to 1914 are the most important period of Joyce's career. It was during these ten years that from a beginner he matured into a skilled craftsman of letters. He made serious beginnings at writing prose-fiction in 1904, but the next three years were a period of hesitation, trial and error. It was during this period that he wrote *Stephen Hero* which he gave up writing in 1907.[13] The year 1907 may be regarded as the turning point in Joyce's career. It was in this year that he may be said to have really discovered himself and embarked on a technique through which he could portray Stephen's character in a most economical way in terms of Stephen's own experiences and growing awareness of the world. It was in 1907 that after three years' groping he began *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young man* which he completed in 1914.

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2. Herbert Gorman, *James Joyce—First Forty Years* (Geofrey Bles, London, 1926), p. 70; *also* Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* (Oxford University Press, London, 1966), pp. 149 and 151.
3. Published at London by Jonathan Cape, and at New York by New Directions.
4. See Sylvia Beach's account of Joyce's hurling the manuscript into the fire, at page 7 of the New Direction edition of the text (New York, 1963). Joyce called it 'a schoolboy's production'; see ibid. p. 8.
5. Ibid. p. 7.
6. Ibid. p. 9.
7. See the references at 2 above, esp. Chapter 10 '1904' in Ellmann's biography of Joyce.
8. Joseph Prescott, *Exploring James Joyce* (Southern Illinois University Press, Carbondale, 1964), p. 17.
9. Marvin Magalaner, *Time of Apprenticeship: The Fiction of Young James Joyce* (Abelard-Schuman, New York, 1959), p. 23.
10. Robert S. Ryf, *A New Approach to Joyce: A Portrait of the Artist as a Guide-book* (University of California Press, 1962), p. 42.
11. Ellmann, op. cit. pp. 152-3.
12. These factual details are based on Ellmann's biography of Joyce.
13. For a comparison of the styles of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and its early versions, see V. D. Singh's 'Versions of Joyce's *Portrait*', *Rajasthan University Studies in English*, No. 5 (1971), pp. 59-67.

EXPERIMENTATION WITH DRAMATIC TECHNIQUE IN O'NEILL'S *THE HAIRY APE*

By Thakur Guruprasad

Eugene Gladstone O'Neill (1888-1953) is by far the greatest figure in twentieth-century American drama. Mainly as a consequence of his indefatigable endeavours since 1915, the American drama gained prestigious entry into world theatre and made significant enough contributions to world drama for carving out for itself a comfortable seat in the Commity. As the son of the successful actor-manager, James O'Neill, he was born and brought up in the environs of theatre. From very early childhood he carried out experimentation in the field of drama, functioning on occasion as actor and stage manager in his father's productions, and acquired a strong aptitude for playwriting and theatrical effect. His attendance at Princeton University (1906-07) in this context appears naturally to lead to an undergraduate prank, providing an early 'escape from the Chateau d'If'—a phrase popularly used in O'Neill criticism to indicate his obsessive relation to his parental environment[1]—as he embarked into mariner's life abroad aboard foreign vessels, which he was later to use experimentally with marvellous effect in his plays. Soon back from his travels, he contracted tuberculosis, which proved a blessing for the art of the theatre, for he used the period of recuperation (1912-14) for extensive forages into the classics of dramatic literature —the Greek masters, Shakespeare and the Elizabethans, and his immediate European predecessors like Strindberg and Maeterlinck. He spent the winter of 1914 at Harvard in George Baker's famous 'Workshop 47'. Powerfully vitalized by such effective preparation, in 1915 he plunged deep into the Little Theatre movement that galvanized American drama, as he moved to Greenwich Village, and in association with R. E. Jones, Kenneth Macgowen, Susan Glaspell and Geogre Cram Cook, established the Provincetown Players—one of the two experimental groups that revolutionized the American theatre.

The Provincetown Players at the Playwrights' Theatre came in handy as a fitting forum for the production of O'Neill's early ventures, the surviving one-acters from the convalescence period (1912-13), to which he hecticly added more, first short one-acters and then longer full-fledged dramas, exploiting his personal experiences of sea life, the tragic episodes of his family life, and the fashionable themes in contemporary life. The time was ripe for such fruitful experimental activity. The ever-increasing vogue of Freudian views on sex, Jungian concepts of racial memory, anti-Puritan morals and mores, opposition to bourgeois materialism and post-war disenchantment with received values and factitious liberal promises—all these and related themes were waiting for someone to express them in the American theatre. O'Neill came as the man of the moment, and with his flair for attempting the 'big thing' in a restless spirit of adventure and experiment, introduced a modern and timely content into the American drama. He brought to bear upon this his intuitive expertise on dramatic action, pictorial composition and sound effects, which he combined with sedulous critical, eclectic absorption of artistic movements (in which the second decade of the present century is notoriously plentiful) to dazzle the play-going world with rich, complex and breath-taking novelties that won him a stable reputation, and made him famous even beyond the limited, though glittering, world of the footlights. His personal triumphs, like winning Pulitzer Prizes for his plays over and over again, brought in their train a unique dignity of position as literature to drama—a thing unprecedented in the history of American letters. Evaluating O'Neill's contribution to drama in the thick of posthumous revival of his plays, John Gassner makes a very apt appraisal:

> O'Neill dignified the craft of playwriting in America. He made it a calling rather than a trade, and he gave playwrights, hitherto mostly hacks or routine entertainers, a position of some importance in American cultural life. Winner of a Nobel Prize and author of plays staged in nearly all capitals of Europe, he became America's first dramatist of international standing. . . . O'Neill represented the avant-garde in this country, if not in Europe, after the First World War. A leader of the experimental Little

> Theatre movement, led by his own play-producing organization, the Provincetown Players, and after 1920 the leading playwright also of the progressive wing of Broadway professionalism, O'Neill sparked a revolt of great moment against middle-class complacency and commonplace realism on the American stage.[2]

Though he made an early name, O'Neill never rested on his laurels, and throughout his career he remained the tireless seeker after newer and bigger effects. *The Hairy Ape* (1922), coming in an epoch-making year in the literary history of our times, bracketed with Ulysses and *The Waste Land*, is, among other things, the culmination of his early career marked by incessant technical experimentation. It has a unique significance for an estimate of his literary genius. On the one hand, it bears visible marks of O'Neill's omnivorous interest in the numerous trends and reactions to the pale and prosaic dramatic tradition which his contemporaries and immediate predecessors in the genre—Ibsen and Maeterlinck, Shaw and Synge, Strindberg and Wedekund, to name only a few leading luminaries—were sharply opposing all over the Western world, and groping for their own different new paths. On the other hand, it can be seen as his first mature triumph, climaxing an impressive array of successes—from *Beyond the Horizon* (1920), his first full-length play, through the expressionist *tour de force*, *Emperor Jones* (1920) and *Anna Christie* (1922), his Freudian extravaganza, to the solid achievement of artistic merit at the head of experimentation in several lines at once, with the techniques of symbolism, expressionism and sur-realism—not to mention the essential background canvas of deterministic, sinister naturalism handed down from the last century and the evergreen cheap histrionics of melodrama.

II

From the very outset, O'Neill started out in full awareness that the naturalist drama (which had been predominant for several decades before he came upon the scene) had failed to satisfy the sensibilities of the imaginative audience. The reality that the naturalistic technique aimed at and achieved under the influence of philosophies of realism on the one hand and determinism on the other was scorned by the new artist as 'holding the family Kodak up to ill-nature' and favouring the 'banality of surfaces',[3] and discarded early. He set himself the task of digging up for the subject of the new drama the realities that lay layers below the surface. Freudian psychology had been demolishing the Aristotelian concept that 'man is a rational animal', and was bringing to the fore the startling realization that what looked rational externally was, in the perspective of buried life, highly irrational. Indeed, it came to be accepted in the form of the movement in art and literature that got a very revealing name in the context of the growing dissatisfaction with realism: Sur-realism. 'Dealing in terms of the irrational, it sought to exalt the subconscious into an active, creative role.'[4] The movement started in 1922. By that time O'Neill had written *The Hairy Ape*, and thus can be said to have anticipated the movement. When he reached this stage in the development of his art, he had matured in his chosen task of externalizing the inner stresses in the lives of individual human beings upon the stage, and of dramatizing striking irrational action arising from such conflicts. Both Yank and Mildred, the two leading characters of the play, in whom O'Neill has boldly experimented with the conventional theatrical concepts of hero and heroine, and radically transformed and sur-realized the relationship, are highly irrational human beings; in fact, they both are eccentrics, to begin with. Their eccentricities have their source in the subconscious conflict of human nature with the corrupting forces of industrialism and capitalism operating on modern consciousness. The inner drama comes to surface in the haughty way Mildred has of obstinately refusing to heed the Second Engineer's advice not to wear milk-white dress in her tour of the firemen's forcastle (sc. ii), or in her highly supercilious behaviour and rude language with her aunt. So it does in the brute posture of Yank, both in his misplaced pride in his calling that he harps out at his fellow workmen on the ship—'I'm de end! I'm de start! I start somep'n and de world moves!...I'm de ting in noise dat makes yuh hear it; I'm smoke and express trains and steamers and factory whistles; I'm de ting in gold dat makes it money! And I'm what makes iron into steel!'[5]—as also in his later, fatal inversion, which marks the crisis in the structure of the play, resulting from his imagined insult by Mildred that sets off his backward journey toward primitive savagery and more and more rejection and unbelonging.

III

His response to depth psychology led O'Neill to modernize both dramatic form and content by attempting to manifest subconscious tensions. The means he adopted for this purpose carried him into areas of experimentation which only venturesome playwrights dared enter and where only exceptionally adept ones could survive. This is what makes him so great among masters of drama.

It is well known that at the time O'Neill started writing plays (*c.* 1914) the leading fashion in artistic circles was Expressionism—pre-eminently a 'repudiation of realism'.[6] Quite naturally, the experimentalist in him was attracted to it. His first full-length expressionist play was *Emperor Jones*, while *The Hairy Ape* was second chronologically. John Gassner describes the former as a 'simple expressionist study of a man's atavistic fears', and goes on to applaud the latter as a greater artistic achievement, with 'greater complexity'.[7] As Robert F. Whitman has said, 'the expressionist techniques are on the whole better integrated' in this play than in *Emperor Jones*, 'for the disassociation, the inner conflict, and the futile reversion to a more primitive orientation are all suggested by the action and setting without recourse to interpolated "visions".'[8] The critical evaluation implied in these statements is near unanimous in the canon of O'Neill criticism. It is intended in this section of this paper to verify and endorse the evaluation that *The Hairy Ape* is the high-point of O'Neill's experimentation with the expressionist technique.

In expressionist art both technique and subject-matter, form and content, are subordinated to the artist's emotion, and 'the problem of finding graphic equivalents for passionate feeling outweighs other considerations; form and colour are exploited to achieve intensity.'[9] In expressionist drama, the artist distorts and stylizes the representation of literal reality, giving it sometimes a semblance of caricature even, to 'express' the inner significance of his work.

All the three stock devices of expressionist art—distortion, stylization and violence—are used in this play profusely, and with greater artistic effect than elsewhere in O'Neill's work. The setting of the play, amply dictated through the playwright's stage directions, is a notable distortion of normal human condition. Scenes i and iv are set in the firemen's forecastle of a ship on high seas; scene iii is the stokehole of the ship; scenes vii and viii are cells of prisoners and animals respectively in a prison and a zoo! Scenes i, iii, and iv recall the underworld, and evoke terrors of claustrophobic nature. The forecastle scene is described as 'crowded with men, shouting, cursing, laughing, singing—a confused, inchoate uproar swelling into a sort of unity, a meaning—the bewildered, furious, baffled defiance of a beast in a cage.... The effect sought after is a cramped space in the bowels of a ship, imprisoned by white steel. The line of bunks, the uprights supporting them, cross each other like the steel framework of a cage. The ceiling crushes down upon the men's heads.'[10] This below-deck setting powerfully conveys the inhuman mechanistic nature of Yank's universe, thus admirably confirming the tenet of expressionist art where the author's emotion surpasses all other considerations like technique and theme.

Another set of powerful distortions involves the degradation of the human race itself. The workingmen in the ship's bowels are bitterly described by Paddy, himself one of them—a sick one at that, as 'caged in by steel from a sight of the sky like bloody apes in the Zoo!'[11] The stage direction for scene iii describes them 'outlined in silhouette in the crouching, inhuman attitudes of chained gorillas.'[12] At yet another level, the final action of the play, i.e. Yank's attempt to identify himself with the gorilla in the zoo, is a horrible distortion dramatizing the evolution theory of man's ancestors. Here O'Neill is handling a marathon theme—the dramatization of the story of man over an eternity of time, a thing as breath-taking as Shaw's attempt in *Back to Methuselah* or Hardy's in *The Dynasts*; the success or failure, therefore, is to be viewed in this perspective.

So has O'Neill used stylization in abundance in this play. The men in the firemen's forecastle in scene i 'resemble those pictures in which the appearance of Neanderthal Man is guessed at. All are hairy-chested, with long arms of tremendous power, and low, receding brows above their small, fierce, resentful eyes. All the civilized white races are represented, but except for the slight differentiation in color of hair, skin, eyes, all these men are alike'[13]—a stylization which is an automaton paradoxically aiming at universality. Again, inspired by Yank's rhetoric about 'belonging' in the same scene, all the men pound the steel bunks alike, as if mechanically.[14] These men react identically to the Engineer's whistle: 'Eight bells sound, muffled, vibrating through the steel walls as if some enormous brazen gong were imbedded in the heart of the ship. All the men jump up mechanically, file through the door silently close upon each other's heels in what is very like a prisoners' lockup.'[15] In scene iv, the voices of Yank as well as his colleagues in the forecastle have a 'brazen, metallic quality as if their throats were phonograph horns.'[16] Similarly, in scene v, the Fifth Avenue faceless crowd returning from church on a Sunday is another peerlessly effective piece of stylization, imaging forth a dehumanized civilization: 'The crowd from the church enter from the right, sauntering slowly and affectedly, their heads held stiffly up, looking neither to right nor left, talking in toneless, simpering voices. The women are rouged, calcimined, dyed, over-dressed to the *n*th degree. The men are in Prince Albert high hats, spats, canes, etc. A procession of gaudy marionettes, yet with something of the relentless horror of Frankenstein in their detached, mechanical unawareness.'[17] Moreover Yank, in a number of his appearances upon the stage, is meticulously described in stage directions in the exact attitude of Rodin's 'The Thinker';[18] and identity requirement dictates that so does the gorilla in the cage in the last scene![19]

Through such stylization, the characters acquire mask-like identities. This expressionistic device O'Neill developed into a kind of theory of drama. In his 'Memoranda on Masks', published in 1932, he looked back on the use of masks in his plays of the twenties, and voiced his conviction that masks were the 'freest solution' of the problem of expressing in drama 'those profound hidden conflicts of the mind which the probings of psychology continue to disclose to us',[20] and went on to propound the dogma of masked drama, declaring that one's outer life passes in a solitude hounded by the masks of others, while one's inner life passes in a solitude hounded by the masks of oneself. He used the mask both in his early and later plays for dramatizing the inner reality of character. In *The Hairy Ape*, expressionistic stylization often climaxes into masks in the shape of outer appearances of characters, suggesting their inner characters. Robert Smith has a mask-name that he remembers better than his name itself! He is called Yank throughout; perhaps this name is used as a mask suggesting that he stands for Yankee. But what is a more significant aspect of his mask is the nickname that gives the title to the play. He is the Hairy Ape. The stage direction in scene iii describes him 'pounding on his chest, gorilla-like';[21] in Paddy's fancy in the next scene he becomes 'a queerer kind of baboon than ever you'd find in darkest Africy'.[22] By scene vi, when he is put in prison for disturbing traffic on the Fifth Avenue of New York, he begins to think himself an ape;[23] in the next scene, the Secretary of I.W.W. contemptuously calls him a 'brainless ape',[24] and finally he identifies himself as hairy ape in his desperate, frenzied, irrational bid to 'belong', and dies in the process in the murderous embrace of the gorilla in the zoo. Yank, however, is not the only character with a mask: Mildred, too, has masks. She identifies herself by her mask of 'a spotted leopard';[25] as a curious implied contrast to Yank's mask, she is a leopard of the jungle, not in the cage. Her other mask (of white dress) makes her 'an apparition'.[26] It may be mentioned that the workingmen's faces are masks of monkeys, and the Sunday crowd of the Ffth Avenue church-goers wear faceless masks.

But the theory of the mask has already gone deeper than aspects of stage-craft in this play, and it conforms to the general remark of Eugene M. Waith:

> ...the characteristic structure of an O'Neill play...is determined by a movement toward unmasking, which is often also a movement of the principal characters toward discovery of the stance they must take toward the fundamental problems of existence. In many of the early plays O'Neill chose an episodic form in which he could show the stages by which, in the course of time, the final discovery was reached.[27]

This play presents, in episodic form, the backward journey of Yank from the modern civilization to primitive life; and the stages of the journey are equally stages of unmasking of his inner character to the audience, and of almost Aristotelian 'recognition' for the tragic hero that Yank becomes.

The third expressionistic tenet of violence, too, is amply manifested in this play. Yank's gestures are from the very start savage: in scene iii he throws his shovel murderously at Mildred; only he misses his mark. Scene v abounds in many violent actions of Yank on the Fifth Avenue. Here the violence becomes fantastic stage farce; for he, supernaturally strong, bumps against and hits members of the crowd with the maximum force and violence, and yet the victims remain unaffected, as if no physical violence is done, and move on with polite gestures and 'I beg your pardon'. However, the extreme form of violence is reached upon the stage in the final scene, when the gorilla crushes Yank to death. Here it comes to the level of melodrama; but the attending effect is so different from melodrama proper that it becomes yet another aspect of O'Neill's experimentation: he has experimented with melodramatic technique to achieve the effect of harrowing cosmic tragedy.

IV

O'Neill criticism has, by and large, given the lion's share to Expressionism in the assessment of experimental techniques employed in *The Hairy Ape*; indeed, so much so, that there lurks the danger of overlooking the other significant experimental aspects of the play. It is only possible to enumerate briefly, though unmistakably, these others in the present section of this paper. Brief mention has already been made, just above, of O'Neill's admirable experimentation with the age-old techniques of melodrama. Another point can be made that even though O'Neill started out, and strongly voiced in the working out of this play, in strong recoil against naturalism, the dialogues of this play have retained the stock naturalistic device of using dialect and slang, aiming at photographic reproduction of speech-habits of characters from different social and regional groups. Then again, the division of the play into eight scenes has also an experimental side—a process reversing that in *Emperor Jones,* where the eight scenes embody an experiment in amplifying the one-acter. In *The Hairy Ape* he aims at condensing eternity into eight scenes by means of episodic form. At any rate, it is indubitably a departure from the conventional practice of treating subject-matter so flagrantly violating the Unities of time and place in terms of acts and scenes, and not merely scenes. This play involves experimentation with Elizabethan Revenge Play, too. It is a kind of Revenge Play—though it deals not with revenge accomplished, but with revenge frustrated: Yank never gets to spit in Mildred's eyes. From this angle, the play reflects a unique encounter of tradition and individual talent. Similarly, the role of the other workingmen in scenes i, iii and iv, and their choral singing may be seen as an early attempt of O'Neill to revive the Chorus of Greek drama, which he did so well in the later trilogy, *Mourning Becomes Electra.*

V

After a bird's-eye view of the multifarious types of experimentation involved in this play, it remains to conclude by pointing out the most lasting effect and power of the play, perhaps resulting from experimentation with symbolism. In the last analysis, the value of this play, as of many of the epoch-making lyrical achievements of twentieth-century drama, lies not so much in what it depicts as in what it suggests. This play, too, makes its mark on grounds of the appeal of its symbolism. The most penetrating meaning of the play posits in symbolic forms. The modern ship on which Yank worked becomes the symbol of tyranny in the age of mechanization and dehumanization. The interactions of the alienated Yank and the rejecting Mildred, New York crowds, inmates of the prison, men of I.W.W., and finally animals in the zoo are significant for what they suggest of the life of man in modern environment. The Hairy Ape is an allegory of man, alienated in the Age of Anxiety, and in O'Neill's own words, the hero of the play is 'a symbol of man, who has lost his old harmony with nature, the harmony which he used to have as an animal and has not yet acquired in a spiritual way.'[28]

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. See John H. Raleigh, 'Eugene O'Neill and the Escape from the Château d'If', a paper presented at the English Institute, Columbia University, September 1963.
2. John Gassner, 'The Nature of O'Neill's Achievement: A Summary and Appraisal', revised and abbreviated version of the essay 'Eugene O'Neill: The Course of a Major Dramatist', in *Theatre at the Crossroads* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, New York, 1960), pp. 65-76. Quoted in Gassner, *O'Neill, A Collection of Critical Essays* in Twentieth Century Views Series (Prentice-Hall, 1964), p. 166.
3. See Gassner, *O'Neill*, p. 170.
4. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (revised edition, 1963), Vol. XVII, p. 63.
5. Eugene O'Neill, *The Hairy Ape*, sc. i, in Bradley, Beatty & Long, *The American Tradition in Literature* (Norton, New York, 1959, 1962), Vol. II, p. 1125. Henceforth referred to as *Norton Anthology*. All references to the text are to this edition.
6. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (revised edition, 1963), Vol. VIII, p. 985.
7. John Gassner, *Masters of the Drama* (Dover, New York, 1940, 3rd revised & enlarged edition, 1954), p. 652.
8. Robert F. Whitman, 'O'Neill's Search for a "Language of the Theatre" ', *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XVI, No. 2 (April, 1960), p. 154-70. Quoted in Gassner, *O'Neill*, p. 150.
9. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (revised edition, 1963), Vol. VIII, p. 985.
10. *Norton Anthology*, pp. 1118-19.
11. Ibid. p. 1124.
12. Ibid. p. 1130.
13. Ibid. p. 1119.
14. Ibid. p. 1125.
15. Ibid. p. 1126.
16. Ibid. p. 1134.
17. Ibid. p. 1141.
18. Ibid. pp. 1133, 1143, 1151.
19. Ibid. p. 1152.
20. Eugene O'Neill, 'Memoranda on Masks', *The American Spectator* (November, 1932), p. 3.
21. *Norton Anthology*, p. 1132.
22. Ibid. p. 1135.
23. Ibid. pp. 1143, 1144, 1146.
24. Ibid. p. 1151.
25. Ibid. p. 1128.
26. Ibid. p. 1132.
27. Eugene M. Waith, 'Eugene O'Neill: An Exercise in Unmasking', *Educational Theatre Journal*, Vol. XIII, No. 3 (October, 1961), pp. 182-91. Quoted in Gassner, *O'Neill*, p. 34.
28 From a statement of O'Neill in the *New York Herald Tribune*, 26 November 1924; see Barrett H. Clark, *Eugene O'Neill* (Dover, New York, 1947), p. 84.

THE METHOD OF PARADOXICAL STATEMENT IN *FOUR QUARTETS*

By K. M. Tiwary

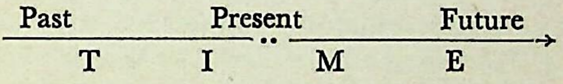
Es gibt keine Privatwahrheiten. (Eucken)

All significant truths are private truths.
(Eliot, *Knowledge and Experience*, p. 165)

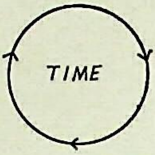
First, I shall cite some examples of paradoxes. Here is the very first:

Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,
And time future contained in time past.
If all time is eternally present
All time is unredeemable. (*Burnt Norton*, ll. 1-6)

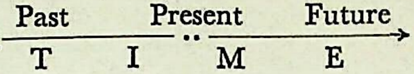
I hold that these statements are paradoxes in terms of the common knowledge and public understanding of the meanings of words that occur in them. We all learn rather early that present, past and future are located at different points on the scale of time, and that notionally they are antithetical to one another. In other words, we visualize these three points on the time scale as follows:



Time flies like an irreversible arrow and the point where it was but is no longer is the past, where it is now is the present, and the future is where it will be later. It is a simple linear sequence with the relations of before and after. But Eliot's statements cited above confound these clear-cut divisions. According to him present as well as past exist in future, and future is contained in past;[1] our commonsense view of time outlined above finds these contradictory and paradoxical. The picture of time that these assertions build up is not the picture of an irreversible arrow, but of a closed circle which may be diagrammed as given below:



Cf.



All time, past, present and future, are rolled into one and are enclosed within a circle. If time moves, it is neither a movement away from a point nor a movement towards a point. In this conception of time the relations of before and after have no place. The categories of past, present and future do not belong to this universe. All time is eternally present in this universe, and therefore, the question of redeeming time in this universe does not arise at all. Eliot insists on this conception of time; he repeatedly asserts his views on it in almost identical words. For example:

> What might have been is an abstraction
> Remaining a perpetual possibility
> Only in a world of speculation.
> *What might have been and what has been*
> *Point to one end, which is always present.*
> (*Burnt Norton*, ll. 6-10)

Again, listen to the following lines from the very end of the first section of *Burnt Norton*:

> Time past and time future
> *What might have been and what has been*
> *Point to one end, which is always present.*
> (*Burnt Norton*, ll. 44-6)

We can cite several other passages to show Eliot's insistence on the cyclical model of time and his rejection of the arrow model of time. The paradoxes that we have referred to are all rooted in this conception of time and are all relevant to the theme of time. But Eliot's paradoxes are not limited to the universe of time alone; indeed, paradoxes are integral to the poetic style and to all the characteristic thematic preoccupations of Eliot in *Four Quartets*. The following passages from *Four Quartets* present paradoxes galore:

> Shall I say it again? In order to arrive there,
> To arrive where you are, to get from where you are not,
> You must go by a way wherein there is no ecstasy.
> In order to arrive at what you do not know
>   You must go by a way which is the way of ignorance.
> In order to possess what you do not possess
>   You must go by the way of dispossession.
> In order to arrive at what you are not
>   You must go through the way in which you are not.
> And what you do not know is the only thing you know
> And what you own is what you do not own
> And where you are is where you are not.
> (*East Coker*, ll. 135-46)

This is one of the several passages in *Four Quartets*, which is obviously a systematic and sustained orchestration of paradoxical statements. The dialectics of lines like 'World not world but that which is not world' or of '. . . the way up is the way down, and the way forward is the way back' and similarly of 'Footfalls echo in the memory/Down the passage which we did not take/Towards the door we never opened/Into the rose-garden' needs explication to be understood. The use of paradoxes on such a scale is enough to persuade us to treat it as essential to the realization of the poetic and philosophic intentions of Eliot in *Four Quartets*. It does not take much percipience to see that Eliot does not use paradoxes gratuitously or as mere literary tricks. Paradoxes are Eliot's individual mode of perception; they are his style of thinking. Therefore we should try to state the reasons of experience, thought and perception that necessitate Eliot's paradoxes relevant to the theme of time as developed in *Four Quartets*.

Whenever we *think* about time, it is the categories of past, present and future that guide and control our thoughts on the subject. This categorization of time is reflected in the three-tense system of the verbs of Indo-European languages. Indeed, some linguists like Sapir and Whorf maintain that our thinking about time in terms of past, present and future is actively promoted and crystallized by the three-tense system of our verbs. Whorf is most explicit on this point; here is what he says:

> Imagination of time as like a row harmonizes with a system of THREE tenses, whereas a system of TWO, an earlier and a later, would seem to correspond better to the feeling of duration as it is experienced. For if we inspect consciousness we find no past, present, future, but a unity embracing complexity. EVERYTHING is in consciousness, and everything in consciousness *is*, and is together. There is in it a sensuous and a non-sensuous. We may call the sensuous—what we are seeing, hearing, touching—the 'present' while in the un-sensuous the vast image-world of memory is being labelled 'the past' and another realm of belief, intuition, and uncertainty 'the future'; yet sensation, memory, foresight all are in consciousness together—one is not 'yet to be' nor another 'once but no more'. . . we can of course CONSTRUCT AND CONTEMPLATE IN THOUGHT a system of past, present, future, in the objectified configuration of points on a line. This is what our general objectification tendency leads us to do and our tense system confirms.[2]

Whorf establishes here a distinction between time as felt and experienced by a subject, and time as an abstract intellectual construction valid for the objective, public world. And furthermore there is a suggestion in here that the objectified intellectual model of time does not correspond to the felt, intuited reality of time. 'For if we inspect consciousness,' states Whorf, 'we find no past, present, future, but a unity embracing complexity. Everything is in consciousness, and everything 'in consciousness *is*, and is together.' These reflections of Whorf on time are essentially the same as Eliot's, or nearly so. One of the conclusions that we can draw from this view of the situation is that the linguistic apparatus readily available for the expression and communication of the intuited time is leaky. It may be the medium most suited to the needs of the communication of knowledge shared in common by all the members of a given speech-community, but it is bound to distort the body of individual, particular intuitions and perceptions. The public myths and beliefs enshrined in the language stand in the way of the private and immediate experience of time. Owing to the inevitable influence of the pre-existent intellectual framework of the trichotomy, past, present and future, on our mode of apprehending time, it requires special mental, and as Eliot would have it, spiritual efforts to apprehend the simultaneity or togetherness of all time in our consciousness. From this angle language appears to necessarily limit the range of our consciousness; its intellectual, discursive character turns out to be hostile to the birth of intuitive perceptions into essential time. As Eliot puts it, 'Time past and time future/Allow but a little consciousness./To be conscious is not to be in time...' Most men are helpless against the tyranny of the linguistic categories of time; indeed, they never become aware of the felt and intuitive reality of time underlying the surface trichotomy of past, present and future. They spend their lives within the four walls of their language. It takes a 'saint', and his spiritual discipline to break the prison and liberate his mind from the illusions bred and nourished by language. What Eliot says is as follows:

> Men's curiosity searches past and future
> And clings to that dimension. . . .
>
> For most of us, there is only the unattended
> Moment, the moment in and out of time,
> The distraction fit, lost in a shaft of sunlight,
> The wild thyme unseen, or the winter lightning
> Or the waterfall, or music heard so deeply
> That it is not heard at all, but you are the music
> While the music lasts.
>
> (*The Dry Salvages*, ll. 199-200, 206-12)

These lines sum up the common man's apprehension of time. But time as apprehended by a 'saint' is of a different order, and is on a different plane.

> to apprehend
> The point of intersection of the timeless
> With time, is an occupation for the saint—

No occupation either, but something given
And taken, in a lifetime's death in love,
Ardour and selflessness and self-surrender. (Ibid.)

Such an apprehension of time achieved through the means so radically ethical and intuitive rather than intellectual and analytical cannot be stated in propositional forms. Therefore, the poet maintains:

These are only hints and guesses,
Hints followed by guesses; and the rest
Is prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action.
The hint half guessed, the gift half understood, is
Incarnation.
Here the impossible union
Of spheres of existence is actual,
Here the past and future
Are conquered, and reconciled. (Ibid.)

As Eliot views it, the release of the consciousness from the bondage of time is a necessary step towards the right action, i.e. moral action, for '. . .right action is freedom/From past and future also.' In the escape from the 'twittering world' of 'dim light' framed by the time before and time after lies the salvation of the human soul. And the poetry that evokes and creates this twittering world in all its concrete particularity is worth attending to in the context of Eliot's view of language as an imperfect medium of expression and communication. I quote.

Only a flicker
Over the strained time-ridden faces
Distracted from distraction by distraction
Filled with fancies and empty of meaning
Tumid apathy with no concentration
Men and bits of paper, whirled by the cold wind
That blows before and after time,
Wind in and out of unwholesome lungs
Time before and time after. (*Burnt Norton*, ll. 99-107)

To my mind the discipline that can bring to life, with such emotive force and intellectual precision, highly abstract reflections on time—and do so despite the inherent incapacities of the medium—is truly the discipline of a saint—a saint who is at the same time a poet. However, once the religious and moral values of the release from the twittering world of the time before and time after has been privately, intuitively realized, the task of communicating them to the reading public presents itself. The task of perceiving the truths obscured by language is replaced by the task of communicating the perceived truths in language. And then begins 'the intolerable wrestle with words and meanings'. The nature of this wrestle is described in the following lines of Eliot:

> So here I am, in the middle way, having had twenty
> years—
> Twenty years largely wasted, the years of *l'entre deux
> guerres*
> Trying to learn to use words, and every attempt
> Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure
> Because one has only learnt to get the better of words
> For the thing one no longer has to say, or the way
> in which
> One is no longer disposed to say it. And so each
> venture
> Is a new beginning, a raid on the inarticulate
> With shabby equipment always deteriorating
> In the general mess of imprecision of feeling,
> Undisciplined squads of emotion. (*East Coker*, ll. 172-82)

This wrestle is necessitated by the dynamic nature of experience for ever-growing new angles, forever developing new themes and emphases, and thus always leaving language far behind with its relatively fixed patterns and strategies for expression. In particular, the common language serves the expressive needs of the common, shared world of human experience; it cannot automatically fit the private world of particular, individual intuitions. In any case, the common language cannot preserve the immediacy and privacy of the intuitions. Therefore, one has to learn to bend the given language into shapes to fit the body of the private world of particular intuitions, and by the time one learns the craft of sharpening and sensitizing the appropriate instruments of expression necessary and sufficient for one set of intuitions and perceptions, new such sets spring to life urging fresh attempts at new expressions, and thus, the process continues *ad infinitum*. Language can never overtake experience; truly new experiences must always remain beyond the reach of the ordinary common language and must always remain inarticulate. Then the task that presents itself to an artist is one of articulating the inarticulate and of expressing the inexpressible. This I take to be the intended meaning of the lines quoted above. This I also consider to be the crucial task which every artist in any medium has to solve for himself. What distinguishes Eliot from other poets, however, is his personal and intensely poetic insights into the nature of this task, and his exceptionally conscious response to it. Indeed, to my mind *Four Quartets* are a great poem, because, among other experiences, they dramatize with vividness and power a great poet's awareness of the intrinsic human centrality of language. In a sense, the poetry of *Four Quartets* is the poetry of language, i.e. the poetry of experience with language. It is this experience which forms the burden of the last section of all the four movements of *Four Quartets*. And it is in these sections that we become aware of Eliot's characteristic strategies for articulating the inarticulate and expressing the inexpressible. I should like to make it clear that for me the inarticulate and the inexpressible are relative to the given state of language, i.e. it is not within the powers of an ordinary language to articulate them and express them by means of the conventional linguistic patterns and structures. Faced with this task, one might give up the struggle and surrender to the dictates of the common linguistic patterns and structures, and thus, impair the fidelity of the experience. Alternatively, one might create a language *de novo*, a private language and thus be deprived of communicating with other human beings. Eliot does neither, or practises both in due proportions. His language is sufficiently private to suitably express the privacy and particularity of his intuitions, and the linguistic patterns are general and common enough to facilitate communication of his intuitions. No wonder then that speech, language, words, meanings form the central concern of *Four Quartets*. Eliot writes:

Since our concern was speech, and speech impelled us
To purify the dialect of the tribe
And urge the mind to aftersight and foresight.
(*Little Gidding*, ll. 126-8)

It is widely accepted that one of the themes of *Four Quartets* is the timelessness or eternity of the immediate experience of things and events. What is not so widely recognised is that no less significant are the reflections of Eliot on the artifice of words that can construct the given eternity of the experience. The language built on the system of the three tenses naturally adapted to the expression of the unidirectional movement is ill-suited to the task of expressing the stillness and eternity of the immediate experience. The very design of our language is such as to preclude the possibility of expressing the co-presence of the beginning and the end; the simultaneity of stillness and movement; the interpenetration of private intuitions and public knowledge. In any attempt to realize this programme—

Words strain,
Crack and sometimes break, under the burden,
Under the tension, slip, slide, perish,
Decay with imprecision, will not stay in place,
Will not stay still. (*Burnt Norton*, ll. 149-53)

But this is only a prelude to a new regrouping of the expressive resources of the language, and this reorganization necessarily entails the purification of the dialect of the tribe. The dialect of *Four Quartets* is the purified dialect of the tribe; it is an enriched dialect; its expressive range has been extended; its communicative powers have been further strengthened. The point I would like to stress is that the method of paradoxical statements in a sustained and systematic manner contributes significantly towards the success of Eliot's heroic struggle for the purification of the dialect. It primarily consists in collocating words and phrases whose meanings and emotional associations ordinarily contradict one another. For example, consider the following: 'In my beginning is my end,' or 'the way up is the way down, the way forward is the way back,' or again, 'And what you own is what you do not own/And where you are is where you are not.'

The grammatical structure of these sentences is quite conventional but the collocations of phrases are startlingly new. A deliberate and sustained development of this method tends to break down our old linguistic habits and forces us to attend to the novelty of perceptions and thoughts which only paradoxes can capture and render. For example, it is only through paradoxes that the cyclic nature of time and its intuitive understanding can be rendered through the linguistic apparatus inseparably bound with the intellectual understanding of time conceived in terms of a linear sequence based on the relations of before and after. It would be particularly so in poetry, for words in poetry have to create what they communicate, and achieve it with compactness and economy. And since intuited time is not a progression from stage to stage in any given direction it stands to reason that the way up is the same as the way down, and the way forward is the same as the way back. The up-down, forward-backward dimensions simply cannot describe the cyclical movement of time. But these are the common dimensions commonly used to describe the movements of objects in space and time. Therefore, Eliot must negate the common mode of apprehending and stating movement in time and space before he can be reasonably sure of stating and communicating his private intuitions into the essential reality of eternity—which is itself unchanging and unmoving. But to negate the prevailing mode of stating movements in time implies the arduous task, and the self-frustating task, of creating a new language. As we have stated earlier, it will hamper communication. This is the dilemma: to accept the old norms of expression is to injure the integrity of experience, in this case the eternity of experience, but to evolve new modes of expression is to impair the communicative capacity of the medium, that is, language. To opt for one to the exclusion of the other is no solution of the problem. The only creative way out of the dilemma is to achieve a balance between the opposite pulls of the two sides outlined above. This is Eliot's way in *Four Quartets*—and this way goes through paradoxes and contradictions. Its purpose is to achieve 'concentration without elimination' and to comprehend 'both a new world and the old mode explicit, understood in the completion of its partial ecstasy, the resolution of its partial horror.'[3] But then this is bound to involve Eliot in paradoxes and contradictions. For example, the need to express the awareness that all movement turns back upon itself in linguistic terms that necessarily imply progression or retrogression cannot but invite paradoxes. Take the following randomly selected lines:

> In the uncertain hour before the morning
> Near the ending of interminable night
> At the recurrent end of the unending...

It is obvious that the phrase 'the ending of interminable night' is paradoxical and even much more so is the phrase 'the recurrent end of the unending'. The two contradictory terms in the first phrase are 'ending' on the one hand, and 'interminable' on the other. This verbal contradiction points up and asserts the asymmetry between the felt eternity of the immediate experience and its statement in terms of beginnings and ends. That is to say, 'ending' in the given line represents an aspect of the intellectual understanding of time, whereas 'interminable' represents the intuitive awareness of time. Similarly, the next line with its contradiction between 'the recurrent end' and 'unending' repeats and reinforces the idea contained in the preceding line. On this showing, paradoxes turn out to be the most effective linguistic means of expressing simultaneously the two apparently antithetical awarenesses of time. Specifically, the paradoxes of Eliot achieve a synthesis of the public knowledge and private intuitions in and through the antitheses out of which they are constructed. A true paradox asserts the union of opposites, binds together what belong apart conventionally, and in doing so denies the logical law of the excluded middle and the law of contradiction. However, this line of enquiry into the nature of paradoxes will not be developed here any further, for it is not directly relevant to the central theme of this paper.

The method of paradoxical statement has been the favourite of all 'mystics' of all cultures in all ages. Indeed some of the paradoxes that we have cited from *Four Quartets* are simple, borrowings from the writings of the Greek and Christian mystics. The line 'the way up is the way down, the way forward is the way back' can be traced to Heraclitus as much as to St. John of the Cross. It is simply a translation of the second of the two epigraphs to *Four Quartets* attributed to Heraclitus quoted by Eliot in Greek (*Hodo's ano kato mia kai hyte*) or it may be again referred to St. John of the Cross, writing on 'the ladder of contemplation'. 'Communications which are indeed·of God have this property, that they humble the soul and at the same time exalt it. *For upon this road to go down is to go up, and to go up to go down*; for he that humbles himself, is exalted and he that exalts himself is humbled.'[4] We can cite many such parallels between Eliot and the mystic philosophers of the past. But this is not the main purpose of this paper. Here the concern is with the method of paradoxical statement used by Eliot and the mystics, and with the factors of experience, perception, etc. that lie behind them and motivate them. The writers on mysticism have sought to explain the use of paradoxes in any attempt to state mystical experiences in various ways. The following passage represents one important approach towards the subject which appears to be relevant to our theme. It says: 'When language is forced to be used for things of this world (i.e. the transcendental world) it becomes warped and assumes all kinds of crookedness: oxymora, paradoxes, contradictions, absurdities, oddities, ambiguities and irrationalities. Language itself is not to be blamed for it. It is we ourselves who, ignorant of its proper functions, try to apply it to that for which it was never intended.'[5] There are many things wrong with this viewpoint, not the least of which is its utterly mistaken understanding of the nature and functions of language. First, it implies that there is one language for this world, and another language for the transcendental world. This is not true, there is only one language which engages many worlds and has to serve them all. Secondly, the way the author groups oxymora, paradoxes, absurdities, irrationalities together, he seems to 'suggest that paradoxes are absurd and irrational.' This is false; paradoxes are not absurd and irrational. Earlier we have argued that paradoxes are consciously used by Eliot as a technique necessary and sufficient for communicating his experiences with fidelity. The view propounded in the passage quoted above would make Eliot a victim of his ignorance! This is preposterous. T. S. Eliot may not be a mystic, or he may be a mystic, but he is undoubtedly a poet exceptionally sensitive to the expressive potentialities of his medium—language. And if the poet's efforts to realize in words the full range of living experiences involve the use of paradoxes, it is paradoxes he must use. There is nothing crooked or warped about this procedure; in fact, to try to escape from it would be absurd and irrational. Eliot's paradoxes in *Four Quartets* are a necessary condition for and, at the same time, the natural outcome of his expression of his characteristically individual experiences. In them language and experience become one and identical. In support of this thesis I would like to quote a literary critic, Raymond Preston. He writes: 'If you are trying to say anything which is at all difficult to express, plain speech is inaccurate—imprecise as an expression of thought, crude as an expression of feeling. It requires qualification which frequently in Eliot takes the concentrated form of paradox; it may be further concentrated and enriched by such means as ellipsis, anaphora, and even play on words....'[6] Preston's view of paradoxes in *Four Quartets* is, in general, correct; at any rate, it is certainly much more relevant and positive than Suzuki's view of paradox in general. But still I feel that Preston fails to assert categorically that paradoxes are essential to the realization of the moral, philosophical and poetic intentions of Eliot in *Four Quartets*. He seems to equate ellipsis, anaphora, punning as literary devices with paradox. I submit once again that paradox in *Four Quartets* is no mere matter of a literary device; it is a mode of apprehending the reality of the different spheres of existence, and of stating them with completeness and finality. In any case, the documentation, classification of literary devices and separate discussion of each in its relevance to the development of themes in *Four Quartets* are not likely to yield much insight. Here in *Four Quartets* the whole being of the English language, its present, past, and future even, is involved; its entire expressive resourcefulness is on test, and this is an enterprise that entails a radical revaluation of the creative use of words in poetry. Indeed, Eliot's encounter with the world of language and his lifelong wrestle with the words and meanings, with the imprecision and vagueness of expression, and his consciously developed discipline of language, function as the paradigm for his encounter with the non-linguistic world of experiences. In *Four Quartets* Eliot presents the discipline of poetic art as an essential condition for the discipline of spirit. The elaboration of these remarks will take us far beyond the limited scope of this note. But I must emphasise that given the basic intentions of Eliot the method of paradoxical statement is inescapable in *Four Quartets*. I propose to end this note with the following lines of Eliot:

> The enduring is no substitute for the transient,
> Neither one for the other. But the abstract conception
> Of private experience at its greatest intensity
> Becoming universal, which we call poetry,
> May be affirmed in verse. (Eliot, *A Note on War Poetry*)

There is no need for it, but still, if only to have the last word, I'll say this that paradoxes are essential to this act of affirmation.

P.S. After I finished writing this paper I happened to read *Mysticism and Philosophy* by W. T. Stace, wherein I found the following:

'Paradox is an important rhetorical or literary device which a writer on any subject may quite legitimately use for the purposes of gaining emphasis, expressing thought content in a striking and dramatic way, forcing the reader to stop and think and to pay serious attention to thoughts which he might otherwise be inclined to slide over and leave only half understood. Literary or rhetorical paradox may also have positive esthetic value and poetic beauty. This last happens because paradox is apt to take the form of a rhythmic swing and balance of opposing clauses succeeding one another in the manner of strophe and antistrophe. Consider, for example, the following lines by T. S. Eliot:

> In order to arrive at what you do not know
>   You must go by a way which is the way of ignorance. . . .
> In order to arrive at what you are not
>   You must go through the way in which you are not. . . .
> And what you own is what you do not own
> And where you are is where you are not.

Certainly, paradox is here used by Eliot as an effective literary device. But even here one may well ask whether that is all.'

My answer is of course that it is not all. What it is I have tried to show in my way in this paper.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. 'What, then, is time? If no one asks of me, I know; if I wish to explain to him who asks, I know not.'

   Later on in his *Confessions*, Book XI, Chapter 20, St. Augustine accepts the reality of only the present, denying any validity to past and future. But then there are three presents: 'a present of things past, a present of things present, and a present of things future.' The present of things past is memory; the present of things present is sight; and the present of things future is expectation. That is to say, in the words of Eliot, 'all time is eternally present'.
2. B. L. Whorf, *Language, Thought and Reality*, pp. 143-4.
3. *Burnt Norton*, ll. 74-8.
4. R. Preston, *Four Quartets Rehearsed*, p. 20.
5. Charles A. More (ed.), *Essays in East-West Philosophy*, p. 43.
6. R. Preston, *Four Quartets Rehearsed*, pp. 17-8.

STEINBECK'S *THE WINTER OF OUR DISCONTENT*

(CONTINUITY OF A THEME)

By Naresh Chandra

I HAVE chosen to give this paper on Steinbeck's *The Winter of Our Discontent* the sub-title 'Continuity of a Theme'. I could also have called it 'The Progress of a Theme', or even 'A Theme's Progress', on the analogy of 'The Rake's Progress', because the theme of *The Winter of Our Discontent* is truly a rake: it is Temptation. I meant to show in the course of this paper that the theme of Temptation has had a continued progress in western literature right from the story of the Fall, through the Books of the Old Testament, and the Temptations of Christ—to cite only a few instances from the Scriptures which are the basis of all western culture—and then in the realm of literature proper, from Dante, through mediaeval Moralities, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Milton, the great seventeenth-century preachers, Bunyan, Goethe, down to our own times in such instances as T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*. To me *The Winter of Our Discontent* seems to be a link in this long chain, and a link forged with such craftsmanship that it will not snap even under the most violent jerk.

Obviously, it could not have been possible for me to survey the whole tradition within the limited scope of a short paper, and so I chose the most outstanding case of this theme in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, and strove to establish a close analogy with Steinbeck's novel. I feel that if I succeed in doing this, the case for *The Winter of Our Discontent* standing on a firm footing in the tradition will have been established.

One factor that makes Temptation of interest to mankind in general, and significant as a literary theme, is the way in which it puts to the test the quality and endurance of the human soul. From this point of view three factors in the theme should be of interest to the creative writer—nature of the temptation; character of the ill-fated person the doors of whose heart are battered by it, and the abetting forces which act the role of internal treachery to the invasion from outside. It will be simply stressing the obvious to provide illustrations for these from the story of the Fall, or the Faust legend, or the life of a mystic like St. Augustine, or a plain man like John Bunyan; and so I shall proceed directly to establish the analogy I have hinted at above and which to the best of my knowledge has not even been touched upon by any of the critics of Steinbeck.

First then, the points of resemblance between the characters of Ethan Allen Hawley, familiarly referred to as Ethan throughout the story, and Macbeth. Macbeth and Ethan are both visionaries, given to seeing the projections of their own imagination suspended on the screen of the air. The instances in *Macbeth* are too well known, and so to save time and space I shall pick out a few from *The Winter of Our Discontent*, depending on the reader to see the parallel for himself. Ethan has something like 'a pool of dark waters' in some region of his consciousness out of which, as out of Yeats' Spiritus Mundi, visions swim out. As he sat watching by the bedside of his wife's dying brother 'a monster swam out of my dark water. My muscles tightened, and I think my lips fleered back like a wolf's at the kill' (p. 92).* His visions are not merely hallucinations, but they produce muscular, motor and nervous reactions. He carries in his mind the 'dark jury of the deep' (p. 94) in which decisions are constantly being taken for him by some mysterious power, and when he returns to his problems, he finds that a course of action has already been marked out for him and he has no choice but to follow it.

He has a habit of sleeplessness, and when of nights he lay awake beside his wife, red spots swam before his mind's eye in the dark, and out of the red spots sprang his visions. On such occasions his grandfather, Captain Hawley, who had been long dead, showed him how the whaling ship the Hawleys had possessed in joint ownership with the Bakers, had been burnt down to the water-line, and the hull sunk to the bottom (p. 251).

Secondly, like Macbeth he is given to self-examination and self-justification. The famous Macbeth soliloquy

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*The page references throughout are to the Pan Books edition of *The Winter of Our Discontent*.

> This supernatural soliciting
> Cannot be ill, cannot be good:—if ill,
> Why hath it given me earnest of success,
> Commencing in a truth? I am Thane of Cawdor:
> If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
> Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair...

finds a close echo in Ethan's musings in chapter 3. His employer, Marullo, Mr. Baker the banker, Joe Morphy the bank counter, the 'drummer', i.e. the salesman of the new firm that wants to have dealings with his store—all have been telling him about the adventure and morality of business, but he has somehow resisted their insinuations, and then he questions himself:

> Marullo was telling me,...and Mr. Baker and the drummer. They all told it straight. Why did it revolt me and leave a taste like a spoilt egg? Am I so good, or so kind or so just? I don't think so. Am I so proud? Well, there's something of that. Am I lazy, too lazy to be involved? There's an awful lot of inactive kindness, which is nothing but laziness, not wanting any trouble, confusion of effort. (p. 52)

In both, this vein of self-examination goes with a vein of self-justification worked up by their superstition. They recognize the hand of supernatural prompting, and their superstitious bent of mind makes mincemeat of their rationality. Margie, who plays the role of the Witches in *The Winter of Our Discontent*, has told the fortune of Ethan by her Tarot cards, and Ethan is left speculating and desperately fighting the suggestion or auto-suggestion:

> The stars incline, they do not command. Well, I have heard that a good many financiers go to astrologers for instruction in stock purchases.... (pp. 51-2)

They are not only men of vision and speculation given to self-examination and self-justification, but they are adept in taking charge of a practical situation with complete mastery. Macbeth's arrangement for Banquo's murder in every minute detail, even to the extent of joining the two hired murderers in the bloody business (that is the view of some critics at least, regarding the third murderer), is comparable to the rehearsal and timing of every detail by Ethan in the execution of the intended bank robbery (pp. 223-4).

Is it merely accidental, or in character, or a deliberately meant similarity between Ethan and Macbeth that both of them have a habit of using ever-new terms of endearment for their wives, because they are convinced of their love and believe that they goad them on to a dubious line of action not for their own greatness but for their husbands'. Macbeth's 'dearest chuck', 'sweet remembrancer' and such other phrases are amply matched by Ethan's; only, Ethan's mind is more inventive and fanciful. At a glance through the book one may pick up such phrases as 'my creamy fowl', 'My cheesecake', 'a dear little baby rabbit', 'little mouse of a mouseness', 'my dimpsy darling'. It may be dismissed as idle curiosity to note such a resemblance, but the psychologist may find some significance in it.

To pass on to the other characters. Mary plays more or less the same role and displays the same characteristics as Lady Macbeth. The contrast with her husband in many traits could not have been merely accidental. While Ethan's brain keeps boiling all the time, and while he passes sleepless and restless nights, Mary shuts off the waking life as one shuts a door on well-oiled hinges, and in her sleep has 'the wise and remote smile of the ancient Greek gods'. Does not Lady Macbeth exhort her husband to dismiss his compunctious thoughts from his mind?—

> A little water clears us of this deed:
> How easy it is then.

and does she not in a more tender moment tell him?—

> You lack the season of all natures, sleep.

So does Mary complain of her husband's sleeplessness and wanderings by night. Having destroyed a rabbit in the garden, he has compunctious thoughts and cannot stay at home. Mary asks him if he would be late, and adds: 'I won't wait up, I'm sleepy' (p. 120). And when he returns late at night from a visit to Danny to live down his compunctious thoughts by playing the good Samaritan to the companion of his boyhood days who had fallen into misery. 'Mary was asleep, smiling...' (p. 126). Macbeth's own invocation to sleep in the moment after the murder of Duncan, when his own long-continued spell of sleeplessness began, is quite significant in this context.

Although husband and wife both, in both the cases, share superstitious belief in supernatural forebodings and promptings, the wives in both the cases are more credulous. As Ethan comes home after a tiring day in the store, she is impatient to tell him:

> I can't wait to tell you—Margie read me in cards today three times, because she said she never saw anything like it. Three times! I saw the cards come up myself. (p. 35)

And while Ethan warns her: 'Can cards think?' she retorts, 'They Know,' and is altogether too excited about the prediction of money and other greatness to listen to her husband's warning, and keeps on drumming:

> That's the way she said it—'Your fortune is Ethan. He is going to be a very rich man, maybe the biggest man in this town.' (pp. 35-6)

So Lady Macbeth on receiving her husband's letter written and sent after his meeting with the witches on the heath, is heard soliloquizing:

> Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be
> What thou art promised: yet do I fear thy nature;
> It is too full o' the milk of human kindness
> To catch the nearest way. (I. v)

It is not merely that the wives of the two tragic heroes have put their faith completely in the predictions, but they have to fight the scruples and diffidence of their husbands.

In another situation in a latter part of the story, but in the same context, when Ethan resists the insinuations of his wife by posing:

> My darling, it isn't that. It's a despairing unhappiness. I'm afraid of the panic money brings, the protectiveness and the envy

she hits back:

> Here's a grocery clerk without a bean, worried about how bad it will be when he is rich.

Does not this taunt have in it an echo of Lady Macbeth's

> Was the hope drunk
> Wherein you dressed yourself? Hath it slept since?

The four pages of chapter 7 of *The Winter of Our Discontent* (98 ff.) are strongly reminiscent of *Macbeth*, I. vii. Such close resemblance cannot be dismissed as accidental.

In the third place there is the character of Marullo, who may be taken as the substitute of Duncan in the Macbeth story. Marullo is old and infirm and his whole business of the grocery store is looked after by Ethan. Once Ethan establishes his integrity by resisting the bribe from the drummer, Marullo comes to have absolute faith in him, as Duncan did in Macbeth (pp. 145-6;—I. ii. 26 *et seq.*). It is this confidence of Duncan in Macbeth, and of Marullo in Ethan, which provides for both the door to temptation they could not miss. But this confidence could not have been enough. Circumstances contrive to make Ethan exploit the confidence. Did not Lady Macbeth on the eve of the murder of Duncan say?—

> Nor time nor place
> Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:
> They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
> Does unmake you.

Ethan had little power in him to harm Marullo, but circumstances put that power into his hands. In idle talk with Joe Morphy, the bank boy, he picks up the information that Marullo's entry into America must have been round about 1920, and that it must have been by the back door (p. 136).

Although Morph drops a hint: 'Don't let on to his guinea eminence that I pulled a blooper about his being a deportation bait,' the hint has sunk into Ethan and become the corner-stone of his treacherous plan. He checks it up from Marullo, and finding that Morph had hit the nail on the head, he can hardly contain the knowledge in his mind. Ethan had a habit of addressing the row of groceries while cleaning the store in the morning, but the next day after the idea was put into his head by Morph, he became more introvert, and instead of preaching at the row of tinned and bottled goods, he sang to himself:

> Now is the winter of our discontent
> Made glorious summer by this sun of York.

He knows that it is not a song, but this snatch from Shakespeare (the opening lines of *Richard III*) expresses his mental state for him. Marullo acquired the store from him, and now Morph had put it into his power to do that by Marullo which he and his accomplice, Mr. Baker, had done by Ethan's father, i.e. caused his financial murder.

It may seem difficult to find parallels for Banquo and Macduff, two other major characters in *Macbeth*, but a little stretching of the analogy will show that Banquo's role is not altogether missing from *The Winter of Our Discontent*. Banquo and Macbeth had been close associates and companions-in-arms; so were Ethan and Danny Taylor. And as Banquo's murder was essential to instal Macbeth securely in power, so, I mean to show in the later part of this paper, was Danny's for Ethan's plan of restoration of his fallen prestige and prosperity. Macduff, who opposes Macbeth consistently and persistently, and who deals the final blow, was not essential in the same form in Steinbeck's story, because Steinbeck's conception of Tragedy is different. It is not a story that ends in the death and destruction of the hero, but one that leaves him alive on the rack of his own mind in a state of terrible isolation and loneliness. In this sense the role of Macduff is taken up partly by the Television man from 'Brock and Schwin' (p. 276). As Macduff makes the final revelation which completely unmans Macbeth, so Dunscombe reveals culpable plagiarism in the essay of Ethan's son which had won the national award. It is with this revelation that Ethan's real tragedy, which had been tightening its grip around him, gives the final throttle that chokes. His soul had already begun to be harassed by returning consciousness of other treacheries in which he had bartered his soul for material prosperity, and Dunscombe's revelation helps them tighten their stranglehold on him into one final suffocating grip.

This much for characters and circumstances: what about the abetting forces? First, his wife Mary, like Lady Macbeth, keeps constantly nudging him with reminders of his low fortune:

> Do I love money? No, I don't love money. But I don't love worry either. I'd like to be able to hold up my head in this town. I don't like children to be hangdog because they can't dress as good—as well—as some others. I'd love to hold up my head. . . . (pp. 38-9)

This obviously puts Ethan into a dilemma, and he asks himself: 'Did Mary want a fortune, or did she want it for me?' (p. 51) Other insinuating abetments come from Margie who professes to be a fortune-teller, from Baker who had advised his father to lose his fortune, from Joe Morphy, from the drummer, and all these make him more speculative than he would like to be. He tries to dismiss the idea from his mind:

> The stars incline, they do not command?. . .Nothing as sweet and remote in my fortune as a star. A beat of tarot deck of fortune-telling cards in the hands of an idle mischievous woman, and she had rigged the cards. Do the cards incline, but not command?. . .they incline me to give more thought than I wanted to, to a subject I detested. (p. 52)

While he is thus speculating with a touch of scepticism, the abetting forces find new allies in his own children. On the evening when the Ethan family is preparing to have Margie at dinner, Allen, his son, shocks him by telling him:

> Do you think I like without no motor-bike? Must be twenty kids with motor-bikes. And how do you think it is

> if your family hasn't even got a car, leave alone no television? (pp. 77-8)

Then he recounts the degradation he suffered in class when he wrote a theme on how his great-grand-dad had been a whaling captain, and the whole class burst out laughing, and nicknamed him Whaley. Allen staggered Ethan all right, but probably his daughter Ellen's brusque query: 'When are you going to be rich?' proved the last straw, because he loved her so well that he thought she would be the last person from whom he would expect such an unkindly cut. He tries to pass off that query as a joke by quipping 'next Friday', but the response is crushing: 'Well I wish you'd hurry up. I'm sick of being poor.' (p. 80)

Steinbeck completes the Macbeth theme by introducing a witch in the story, for what is Margie with her tarot cards, and trances and visions, if not a modern witch. Not only that, she has an authentic witch ancestry. She has a chequered past, but the most interesting item in her antecedents is that she is descended from a Russian great-grandmother who had been banished to Alaska (which was then a Russian possession) for witchcraft, then thought to be a worse crime than murder (pp. 85-6). As Margie reveals this guilty but colourful secret, Ethan inquires what her great-grandmother did. 'She raised storms.' Margie justifies her ancestry, for she too raises storms in her own way in the peaceful calm of a family circle. Later when Ethan visits her in her room—which Margie describes as 'A pleasure-dome, soft light, smell of musk—down to a sunless sea!'*—Ethan remarks, 'I guess you are a witch all right,' and she replies, 'You know goddam well I am. A poor, pitiful small town witch.'

Margie is invited to read Ethan's fortune, and after much talk in jest and earnest she starts throwing her tarot set and reading what the cards signify:

> 'The king of batons'. . . This is you—a picture of a crowned and robed king holding a huge red and blue sceptre, and Rois de Baton printed under him. . . . (p. 88)

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*The *Kubla Khan* allusion is significant.

Isn't there an echo in this of the vision shown to Macbeth by the witches when he visits their den (V. i). And then suddenly in the middle of her card-reading, she seems to be overcome by some invisible power, collects her cards in a pack and apologizes: 'Can't do it. . . . Happens sometimes.' Mary suspected that she had seen something dreadful, which she did not want to tell, and Margie tells of an experience of hers which she had when she was a little girl. She had seen a snake, a Rockey Mountain rattler, change its skin. 'Well, looking at the cards, they disappeared, and I saw that snake change its skin, part dusty and ragged, part fresh and new. You figure it out.' And Mary said enthusiastically, 'Maybe it's a symbol of the change in fortune that's coming to Ethan' (p. 89).

So much about the most obvious similarities between the theme of *The Winter of Our Discontent* and the theme of *Macbeth.* If Steinbeck had just repeated Shakespeare's items, we would take his genius to be only of a secondary order. But he introduces many new strains which give greater complexity to character and plot; and these justify the sub-title of this paper —'Continuity of a Theme'—because continuity is not a mere repetition but a progress, an advance over what has been taken or adapted from an original source or tradition. If Steinbeck took the idea of the theme of his book and of the character of his tragic hero from *Macbeth,* he made both more complex by giving them traits and strains that are not found in the original.

The new strains that Steinbeck gives to the character of Ethan are a galling awareness of a contrast between the status and fortune of his forefathers and his own. The sense of social degradation is made to co-exist in him with a guilt-consciousness. Although the fortune of the family was brought low by the treachery of Captain Baker with his grandfather Captain Hawley, and then by the ill advice of Baker the banker, the old Captain's son, to his father, Ethan somehow holds himself responsible for it. Thirdly, there is the crushing sense of subordination to an immigrant who is also a Roman Catholic. To these may be added his exposure to the temptation of woman and bribe, which are probably meant to give a modernity to the character. And yet all these new strains are so well in harmony with his basic character that the fully developed character as it comes out of Steinbeck's treatment is all of a piece; and not only that, but this greater complexity of character makes his problem and the theme of the novel deeper and more complex.

A similar new dimension is given to the character of Margie, the witch of the novel. The witches of *Macbeth* remain unrealizable in their objectivity, at least to a modern audience, and we have to invent psychological explanations for them as the projections of Macbeth's own inner self. Margie's character has been made convincing, and has almost been redeemed by ascribing to her a complete realization of her position and role in life. Towards the very end of the book when Ethan in his state of depression and confusion comes to her to find at least physical and emotional relief, she gives an explanation for her life that compels an admiration for her perspicuity, drawing her analogy from the bullfight, in which the exhausted and gored bull, staggering and uncertain of his movements, has to be given some sort of a target for his horns:

> Remember how he gets confused and uneasy, sometimes just stands and looks for an answer? Well then, they have to give him a horse or his heart will break. He has to get his horns into something solid or his spirit dies. Well, I'm that horse. And that's the kind of men I get, confused and puzzled. If they get horns into me, that's a little triumph. Then they can go back to muleta and espada. (p. 270)

She knows her real role in life; and presumably she plays the role of the witch of the modern society only to make herself more intriguing and desirable in her assumed role. She has had her eye on Ethan from the very beginning when she blatantly threw all her physical charms into his face (p. 80), and then probably she started the tarot card game to get her tentacles more tightly around him.

This greater complexity of character is matched by a corresponding complexity in the nature of the temptation which makes a many-pronged attack on him, coming through practically every character of the novel. In Macbeth it is the goadings of his wife and the insinuations of the witches working on and abetting the inner promptings of his own mind; but in *The Winter of Our Discontent* Ethan has to stand up against the hints and insinuations from his wife Mary, from Baker the banker, from Joe Morphy, from his own son and daughter, and above all from the vision of his grandfather Captain Hawley pointing to the spot where his ship was actually burnt down by the treachery of his partner, Captain Baker. Baker the banker, the son of the old Captain Baker, seems to realize the guilt, to which he has added his own by helping Ethan's father lose his fortune in a bad investment on his advice. Baker's insistent goading of Ethan to invest even Mary's money:

> Lose it if you have it, but risk it. With care and good advice you don't have to lose it. Risk isn't loss. Our people have always been calculated-risk people and they didn't lose. I'm going to shock you, Ethan. You're letting down the memory of old Cap'n Hawley. (p. 20)

may be either inveterate business acumen, or a genuine attempt to repair his old wrong by helping Ethan retrieve some of his old fortune; but in either case it must have been hard to resist, particularly because he has won Mary over to his side.

There is one problem to be settled if we take *The Winter of Our Discontent* as a continuation of the *Macbeth* theme. How do we explain the Danny episode? Danny Taylor is an old playmate of Ethan's who has brought himself to the sorry state of an inveterate drunkard, sunk low in spirit and health. Ethan's visit to Danny in the night when he had compunctious feelings after destroying a rabbit (pp. 120-1), and advancing him Mary's money for his medical treatment, about which he had shown such scruple in investing on Baker's insistent advice, seems at first sight to be foreign to the *Macbeth* scheme. But on a closer look it justifies its place in the story. For a tragic hero to be effective it is essential that his creator find some device to engage for him the admiration of the reader/audience. Shakespeare had done that by giving to Macbeth moral scruple of a sort, and other virtues that belong to a noble spirit, to which Lady Macbeth alludes in her soliloquy:

> yet do I fear thy nature;
> It is too full of the milk of human kindness
> To catch the nearest way:

and that is why in his fall we feel there is destruction and waste of noble human material. Ethan's concern for Danny, particularly on the night when he is tortured by compunctious thoughts at the destruction of a live creature, seems to have been introduced in the story with the same motive. Ethan could stand the sight of the poverty of his wife and children, but he could not stand the misery of the friend of his boyhood days, nor could he quell the thought of having destroyed a rabbit at Mary's behest the same evening. Naturally we conceive admiration for such a character, and his fall affects us with emotions proper to Tragedy.

There is also a second aspect of the Danny episode which makes it fit into the *Macbeth* scheme. The dialogue between Danny and Ethan, prior to Ethan's making over a thousand dollars of Mary's money without bond or condition attached to it, is strongly reminiscent of the dialogue between Malcolm and Macduff when they meet in England.

> He sighted at me over the neck of the whisky bottle as though it were a bead on the end of a rifle. 'You'd loan me Mary's money?'
>
> 'Yes.'
>
> 'Without security?'
>
> 'Yes.'
>
> 'Knowing the chance of getting it back is a thousand to one against?'
>
> 'Yes.'
>
> 'There's an ugly thing in a drunk, Eth. I don't believe you.' He licked his lips. 'Would you put the money in my hands?'
>
> 'Whenever you say.'
>
> 'I have told you not to.'
>
> 'But I will.' (pp. 124-5)

It will be simply stressing the obvious if I drew a comparison with *Macbeth*, IV. iii.

There is yet another significance of the Danny episode which in its effect of intensifying the tragedy is analogous to something in *Macbeth*, and we shall notice it presently in connection with the end of the story because it pertains to the end.

With all the insinuations and abetments working on his mind to find money from somewhere to invest in business to improve his fortune, Ethan plans a robbery on Baker's bank. He has rehearsed the whole thing several times and timed every step to the exact second, but Steinbeck invents an incident that prevents its accomplishment. A man from the Federal Department of Justice appears on the scene at the nick of the moment, and the story takes a most unexpected turn. If Ethan could have had success in his plan and got away with it, we would have dismissed him from our thought as a scoundrel; if he had been caught, he would have figured as a mere criminal, and there would not have been anything tragic about him. But the turn that Steinbeck gives to the story prepares the way for the tragedy both in the Shakespearean and the modern sense. The Federal man brings the information that Marullo is going to be deported for illegal entry, and that he has bequeathed the store to Ethan. The question as to who played the informer to the Department of Justice is not difficult to answer if we relate page 171 of the book with page 232. Ethan is most certainly the informer, and thus in terminating the career of Marullo in New Baytown and in America, Ethan commits a murder not only in the metaphorical sense, but literally a murder according to his own concept. Ruminating on the end of the career of his father in the earlier part of the book, Ethan had observed:

> Mr. Baker and his friend did not shoot my father, but they advised him, and when his structure collapsed, they inherited. And isn't it a kind of murder? (p. 97)

Thus Ethan's murder of Marullo is analogous to Macbeth's murder of Duncan. But Macbeth causes the murder of Banquo as well; and so does Ethan that of Danny. Insinuations and promptings from so many directions had made Ethan's mind scheming and plotting like that of Macbeth. He knew that Danny possessed the only site for the aerodrome so essential for the development of New Baytown; and he could not have advanced one thousand dollars to Danny without figuring out that he would not spend the money on treatment but on drinks, and that a thousand dollars worth of drink would certainly kill him. He also must have realized that Danny had a core of goodness in his heart, and that he would not depart this world without doing a good turn to him. Danny bequeathed the aerodrome site to Ethan. The ghost of Danny like the ghost of Banquo, in the imagination of Ethan at least, enters while the family of Ethan is going to celebrate with a feast Allen's victory in the National Essay Competition:

> I do not know whether she had heard of Danny Taylor or heard and retired him. Certainly I did not invite him to the feast but he paced about outside. I knew I would have to go to meet him later but I did not ask him in. (p. 264)

Thus Ethan makes one big success out of two planned murders, as Macbeth had done, but what about the end? Macbeth finds himself in terrible loneliness after the death of his wife, with every one and every thing in revolt against him. He dies fighting, his end being brought about by an element of tragic irony in his superstition-inspired self-confidence: no other end would have had the sublimity of tragedy. Ethan also finds himself in terrible loneliness, isolated even from his so well-beloved wife by reason of the problems he has created around himself. Towards the very end of the book when Ethan is returning from Margie's he meets Joe and in the dialogue that ensues between the two, occur the following significant observations:

> 'Story of my life. When the cards are down—no place to go. Nobody to talk to.'
> 'You should get married.'
> 'That's nobody to talk to in spades.'
> 'Maybe you're right.'
> 'Damn right I am. There's nobody as lonely as an all-married man.'
> 'How do you know?'
> 'I see 'em. *I'm looking at one.'* (pp. 274-5)

He cannot confide even in his wife (pp. 267-8). He finds every one in revolt against him. Even his son has revolted by being caught as a hoax in the essay-competition. He had copied the essay from several sources and had brought shame on the family, and this is discovered at the moment when Ethan is going to be set up as a candidate for the Managership of the town. His plan to end his life is to wade into the sea, cut a vein with a razor blade and abandon himself to the waves. But either his resolution fails him, or the waves refuse to accept such tainted sacrifice, or perhaps he is overcome by the tenderness for his daughter Ellen, who probably had a premonition of his intended last journey and had tried to detain or even accompany him—whatever it was, he could not end his life:

> 'A surge of wave pushed me against the very back of the Place. And the tempo of the sea speeded up. I had to fight the waves to get out, and I had to get out. . . .'
>
> (p. 282)

Yes, he had to get out to be a permanent tragic spectacle to himself and to the rest of the world.

This, according to my lights, is the analysis of the story of *The Winter of Our Discontent*, and I have not sought to establish the parallel with *Macbeth* out of mere idle curiosity. Among the major writers of America, Steinbeck has been the most adversely criticised. To cite just one judgment about him, Leslie Fiedler felt 'a sense of outrage over the award of Nobel Prize to John Steinbeck.' The chief objections against him are that from his early work he selected for development only those features which were good for popular best-selling and for the cinema world; that there is more than a touch of adolescence in his view of life; that even his best works like *The Grapes of Wrath* are terribly sentimental and more of a sociological documentary than works of art. He concerns himself with agararian labour and industrial trouble and with problems that are local rather than human and universal. Most of the criticisms I have been able to consult come from the years prior to 1960. *The Winter of Our Discontent* appeared in 1961, and the only book on the American novel appearing after that date which I have been able to consult (Fiedler's *Waiting for the End*) does not even mention it. This paper is only a preliminary probe into the texture and quality of *The Winter of Our Discontent*, and I feel it establishes that in this novel at least, Steinbeck concerns himself not with a local or sociological problem, but with one that is perpetual, universal and human.

My purpose in tracing the parallel with Macbeth is not to stress Steinbeck's unacknowledged indebtedness to Shakespeare amounting to plagiarism, but to show that Steinbeck is capable of conceiving themes and problems that are not merely regional-sociological, but fundamentally and universally human. I feel inclined to think that the parallel I have traced was not even present in Steinbeck's thought, and that it is a case of the prototypes in literature. My final plea is that if *Macbeth* is one of the great classics of world literature, why not another work created round the same prototypal theme?

ROBERT GRAVES: A STUDY IN POETIC CRITICISM

By J. B. Mishra

A careful reading of Graves' work will show that there has been a very distinct pattern of progress in his career, and that there are in reality four sharply delineated periods into which his work may be divided:

First Period (1916 to 1923),
Second Period (1923 to 1926),
Third Period (1926 to 1938), and
Fourth Period (1945 to the present)

In the first period we find Graves thrown out of his whimsical and uninteresting Georgianism by the shock of the First World War. After 1918 we see him in his pain-relieving phase, when he believes poetry to be a healing measure for the many psychological disturbances the War has brought him. He seeks, through the composition of self-consciously childlike poems, to escape from the turbulent and potentially destructive emotions aroused in him by the War into an ultra-romantic world of fantasy.

In the second period Graves determines not to become emotionally involved in his work. By 1923 he feels tired of emotional intensity and is gliding into the semi-detached analytical poetry. He announces at the outset that he will no longer cater to 'those who demand unceasing emotional stress in poetry'; that his poems will from now on examine coolly a series of problems in religion, psychology, and philosophy.

The third period of Graves' career opens in 1926, with the arrival in England of Miss Laura Riding, the American poetess. The influence of Laura Riding is quite possibly the most important single element in his poetic career. She persuaded him to curb his digressiveness, and his rambling philosophizing, and to concentrate instead on terse, ironic poems written on personal themes. The satiric mode predominates during most of this period, although one notices now a growing tendency in

Graves towards a serious and direct treatment of the themes to which he was ultimately to give his complete attention.

After an interim period of six years, during which Graves composed only fourteen new poems, his fourth period begins in 1945 with the publication of *Poems 1938-1945* and has continued to the present. By the end of the Second World War Graves had become a poet able to write with technical perfection. But he still lacked one quality that all poets must possess if they are to be more than competent craftsmen. This quality is: 'a vision of the universe' which informs and unifies all their work, a way of going beyond themselves into something larger, more universally meaningful—in short, a religious attitude. This unifying vision came to Graves in 1944, when he began his study of the White Goddess. This Goddess caught Graves's imagination as nothing else had ever been able to do; and he immediately became her ardent devotee. Since then she has been his poetic inspiration. Believing that 'the main theme of poetry is, perhaps, the relations of man and woman', he has caused the Goddess to become the woman for whom his poems must express his love.

Throughout these four periods Graves has made thorough and ceaseless pruning of his work, and it has been almost invariably beneficial to him. Randall Jarrell remarks that Graves is 'the best re-writer and corrector of his own work'. But commendable as it may be, this habit has created no small problem for the critic. To see what he was like in 1916, one must read the volume that was published that year. Unfortunately, his critics have seldom done this. And the result is that Graves has generally been described as a man whose poetic theory, poetic technique, and attitudes towards life have remained almost unchanged and without development from the beginning of his career to the present. This notion is of course an absurd one, and can be easily removed if one takes the trouble to read more of Graves than the volume of any one period.

Graves's critical views are expressed in about more than a dozen books of criticism, and in the numerous essays and talks on poetry he has produced over the past fifty years. Some of his notable critical works are: *On English Poetry* (1922), *Contemporary Techniques of Poetry* (1925), *Poetic Unreason* (1925), *Another Future of Poetry* (1926), *A Survey of Modernist Poetry* (1927), *A*

Pamphlet Against Anthologies (1928), *The White Goddess* (1948), *The Common Asphodel* (1949), *The Crowning Privilege* (1955), *Five Pens in Hand* (1958), *Steps* (1958), *Food For Centaurs* (1960), *Oxford Lectures on Poetry* (1962), *Mammon and The Black Goddess* (1965), and *Poetic Craft and Principle* (1967).

Each of his four main periods has in it at least one critical work that serves as a valuable commentary on the nature of the poetry of that period.

In the first period Graves began his career as a critic with *On English Poetry* which is thoroughly romantic in its concern. In it there is little that had not been said in the first half of the 19th century by Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Hazlitt, and Poe. We shall have little difficulty in recognizing the book's close alignment with the romantic tradition. However, it represents one of the earliest attempts in this century to explain those romantic tenets in terms of Freudian concepts—to apply modern psychological theories to the criticism of literature in general. Here Graves gives, for the first time, his definition of poetry controlled and uncontrolled, distinguishing classic from romantic, and fake from real. There are two meanings of poetry as the poet himself has come to use the word: first, poetry, the unforeseen fusion in his mind of apparently contradictory emotional ideas; and second, poetry, the more or less deliberate attempt, with the help of a rhythmic mesmerism, to impose an illusion of actual experience on the minds of other.

As a romantic poet Graves's primary concern is with the poet, not with the audience for poetry. The internal conflicting forces according to him are the components of character that are created by heredity, environment, and experience. He remarks:

> a poet is born, not made...a man is not a poet unless there is some peculiar event in his family history to account for him...the poet like his poetry is himself the result of the fusion of incongruous forces. (p. 33)

He gives in this book his definition of the romantic and classical conceptions of poetry—the two classes into which he feels all poetry may be separated. He says that romantic poets are true poets, who have made their poems out of their own inner struggles, and who have written out of inspiration, without initial regard for form or logic. Classical poetry is confined within rational and educative limits. It stresses the importance of the set verse-forms and the traditional construction of drama. Poetry which is not of unconscious type, Graves labels as 'didactic' or 'careeristic'. He scorns any poem which has been composed with a conscious pre-determined aim and form.

But one is strongly inclined to believe Graves when he says in *Goodbye to All That* (pp. 388-9) that:

> My poetry-writing has always been a painful process of corrections, and corrections on top of corrections. I have never written a poem in less than three drafts.

We cannot help but marvel at the immense time and labour spent on the secondary phase of correction by this romantic poet who insists in his criticism that poetry must be principally the product of unconscious inspiration, and only secondarily, the product of conscious craftsmanship.

As Graves himself admits in his autobiography *Goodbye to All That*, *On English Poetry* is an uneven work, in many places 'scrappy, not properly considered, and obviously written out of the reach of a proper reference library' (p. 388). There is much in it that is trivial, brash, and flippant, and Graves seems at times to sacrifice consistency and accuracy for the sake of cleverness. He is frequently self-contradictory. If he emerges from *On English Poetry* as a romanticist in theory, he has also here revealed himself as a classicist in practice.

In the second period (1923 to 1926) of his career his criticism remained basically allied to the psychological tenets he had espoused in his first period. In1 925 came Graves's *Poetic Unreason* and in it once again poetry is held valuable for its healing qualities. He remarks:

> For the poet, the writing of poetry accomplishes a certain end...; it acts for him as a physician of his mental disorders. (*Poetic Unreason*, p. 2)

In *Another Future of Poetry* (1926) we see Graves once again as a poet who is vitally concerned with the techniques of his craft, and who is convinced that the pragmatic function of poetry is a primary concern of the poet. He believes at this stage in his career that poetry's chief aim is to enhance the mental and emotional health of its author and its readers; and his concern is the development of a poetry which will perform this function most effectively.

In *Poetic Unreason* he attempts to establish the importance to poetry of an understanding of modern psychological theories, and to investigate the nature of the creative process. In *Another Future of Poetry* he is more specific about the way in which the poet can utilize the technical devices available to him so that his poetry will accomplish its purpose. Why Robert Graves should seem at this time in his career as a poet to be turning his back on his own theories, and to be ignoring the responsibility that he had set for the poet, is not entirely clear. The most likely answer is that the failure of his own subjective and sensuous earlier work aroused in him suspicions that he was in danger of writing his way out of the very difficulties on which his strength as a poet depended. Therefore, he turned from the romantic attitude of his 'true' poet to the more abstract and brain poetry which he predicted for those writers who have lost the impulse of romance.

In the third period (1926 to 1938) Graves was under the crucial influence of Miss Laura Riding for thirteen years. In his 'Foreword' to *Collected Poems* (1938) he says:

> In 1925 I first became acquainted with the poems and critical work of Miss Laura Riding, and in 1926 with herself; and slowly began to revise my whole attitude to poetry. (p. xxiii)

The two volumes expressive of what Graves felt at this time about the profession of poetry are: *A Survey of Modernist Poetry* (1927) and *A Pamphlet Against Anthologies* (1928). *A Survey of Modernist Poetry* is a statement of their opinions about the present condition of poetry and poetry criticism in England and America. *A Pamphlet Against Anthologies* (1928) is the second Graves-Riding collaboration. In this they express their scorn for the anthologist, who strives to reap financial benefits from the public's insipidity, instead of offering it poems which will make it sharpen its intelligence and sensibility. We find that in 1927 and 1928 Graves's theory of poetry had caught up with what his own poetic practice had been since 1923, when he sought to turn his back on his public and to write only for himself and for those few who shared his psychological and philosophical concerns. In his 'November 5th Address' given in 1928 to the Teachers' Union in London, he says that there are 'two familiar ways of not writing poetry': One is through 'fantasia' —that poetry which is analogous to dreaming. It is fully intelligible only in a limited personal context. Its chief weakness is that it is not fully removed from the author. The other sort of non-poetry is 'classicism'—that poetry which is deliberately and rationally conceived, independently of any inspiration on the part of the poet.

'Fantastic' poetry is, of course, what Graves had earlier championed, and what he had to write before 1923; and 'classical' poetry is what most of his practice amounted to in the second period of his career—although, as we have noted, he was not always successful in suppressing the romantic element.

The critical work of Graves's third period is, then, a repudiation of the theories he had espoused in his preceding studies of poetry, and a rejection of both of his earlier modes of composition.

For the most part, Robert Graves's critical writings since the 1948 publication of *The White Goddess* have been of two sorts: first, defences of his theories equating true poetry with religious invocation of the Muse, and second, attacks on those poets, both past and present, who have failed to pay the Muse her proper tribute. The defences are remarkable chiefly for their attitude of calm, untroubled conviction. But the attacks are all so extreme and subjective that many of Graves's recent critics have thrown up their hands in consternation and horror when forced to comment upon them. Hazard Adams, for example, in his 'Criticism: Whence and Whither', *The American Scholar*, xxviii (Spring, 1959), pp. 226-38, calls Graves 'a berserk of violence', and finds his attacks full of unfairness, irrationality, and professional jealousy. But Adams admits at the same time that Graves's violence is 'art and sometimes criticism'. Similar comments are given by John Cotton, John Davies, F. W. Bateson, and Herbert Read.

But, however much Graves's criticism of either sort is vitiated by his personal idiosyncrasies, the fact remains that whatever he has said in the past two decades about poets and poetry is well worth reading.

In 1949 Graves submitted his earlier critical writings to the same winnowing process by which he has continually altered his poetic canon, and published whatever he found deserving of retention in a work entitled *The Common Asphodel: Collected Essays on Poetry, 1922-1949.* The psychological arguments of the first and second period, and the sociological and historical analogies of the third period seemed to him now to be full of contradictions. And he accordingly retained from these volumes of the former periods only their practical observations about the techniques of composition, which he still felt to be reasonably sound. Most of *A Survey of Modernist Poetry* and *A Pamphlet Against Anthologies* was allowed to survive.

Of the essays in *The Common Asphodel*, the most illuminating is 'How Poets See'. In it Graves talks first about his own visual peculiarities, then about those of Keats, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Milton, and Donne.

Six years after *The Common Asphodel* Graves published *The Crowning Privilege* (1955), another collection of critical essays, the most important of which were the six Clark Lectures he had delivered at Cambridge the previous year. His chief point in these lectures is that poets belong to no guild, group, society, or association, and owe their allegiance only to the Muse herself; and that if they are false to this 'Crowning Privilege', they betray the cause of poetry. These lectures are typical Graves: witty, learned, tough, and academically outrageous and perverse.

In the course of English literary history, there have been very few poets, Graves feels, who were sufficiently aware of their unique privilege. His old favourite John Skelton was one, John Dryden was not: 'He earned the doubtful glory of having found English poetry brick and left it marble—native brick, imported marble' (p. 3). Marvell was one, Cowley was not. Because the Goddess insists on truth, and ridicules the idea of using argument or rhetorical charm to control her intuition of truth, Milton lost her favour 'when he allowed his rhetorical skill to dull his poetic sense' (p. 108). The whole period between Marvell and Blake is, almost, barren. All the neo-classicists were inspired only by self-love or by the desire to appear wittier than their fellow-poets. The greatest classicist of them all, Pope, was the greatest villain of them all—and 'an extremely poor technician', says Graves (p. 45).

Of the Romantic poets, John Clare, who went mad in his quest for the Goddess, is ranked above Wordsworth who began as a devotee of the Goddess, but who deserted his personal Muse—Annette Vallon—and ended as a fumbling servant of the public. Graves adds, as for Tennyson, he never had a Muse, 'except Arthur Hallam, and a Muse does not wear whiskers' (p. 50). In the last of the lectures, entitled 'These Be Your Gods, O Israel!' Graves snubs the public for having deified such dubious poets as Yeats, Pound, Eliot, Auden, and Thomas. He pours out a merciless resentment at the undeserved adulation of the five contemporary deities.

Yeats, while a man of industry and careful craftsmanship (except for 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree'), lacked divine 'grace'. He remarks:

> 'Grace' is the presence of the Muse Goddess; but she does not appear unless her poet has something urgent to say, and to win her consent a poet *must* have something urgent to say. Yeats had a new technique but nothing to say.
>
> (*The Crowning Privilege*, p. 123)

To publish poems, as Yeats did, strewn with references to which not one reader in ten million has the key, is regarded as discourtesy by the Muse; but to be obscure, and to misquote frequently as well, is even more heinous poetic crime—and this, says Graves, is what Ezra Pound has done. His major work, the *Cantos*, is sprawling, ignorant, indecent, unmelodious, and seldom metrical (p. 130); and he is fond of salting his poems with tags from languages of which he knows little.

The worst thing he says of Eliot is that he was too much influenced by Pound. He suggests that it might have been better for Eliot to have stopped writing poetry after *The Hollow Men* (1925). Once he wrote to Douglas Day about Eliot, 'He died as a poet about 1927, as far as I was concerned.' In the thirties he 'became a churchwarden, edited Kipling, and recanted his former aspersions on Milton' (p. 104).

Auden, for all his skill in composing light verse, is nothing more than a synthetist of the styles of other better poets. Graves says that he is guilty of plagiarising the work of Laura Riding, a vastly superior artist.

Of the five idols, only Dylan Thomas is treated at all sympathetically by Graves, who nevertheless deplores: 'Dylan Thomas was drunk with melody, and what the words were he cared not.' But he thought that Thomas was above all a romanticist, an anti-intellectual, and Graves likes him for this.

Although Graves in the Clark Lectures 'is undoubtedly more of a literary sniper than the scrupulous analyst of meanings and values', as F. W. Bateson says; and although he is sometimes even guilty of carelessness in them (as when, in discussing Yeats's *Chosen*, he mistakenly supposes that the narrator is a man, not a woman), there is still a great deal of sound, practical commentary and advice in *The Crowning Privilege* to redeem Graves as a critic. He is, perhaps, at his best when outlining the responsibilities of the poet, both to his profession and to society. Sincerity, simplicity, and lucidity are the poetic virtues he emphasizes:

> Personally, I expect poems to say what they mean in the simplest and most economical way; even if the thought they contain is complex. . . . The Goddess rejects all over-erudite references in the poems offered to her. The poet's approach to the Goddess is a personal one: he comes as himself, not in fancy-dress or borrowed clothing. . . and speaks gently, clearly, and intimately.
>
> (*The Crowning Privilege*, pp. 105-6)

Rhythm and metre are a necessary discipline in poetry, but the poet must be careful not to be led by its demands away from the original thought that had prompted him to write:

> It is unprofessional conduct to say: 'When next I write a poem I shall use the sonnet form'—because the theme is unforeseeable, and theme chooses metre. A poet should not be conscious of the metrical pattern of a poem he is writing until the first three or four lines have appeared.
>
> (*The Crowning Privilege*, p. 92)

Although Graves continues to believe that a sort of magical inspiration lies at the roots of the creative process, and that a poem, in its initial stage, at least, must be worked out while the poet is in a trance, he seems now to stress more than ever the necessity for a careful and painstaking 'secondary elaboration'. It appears that excellence in poetry causes a certain amount of hard labour, especially, with problems of prosody. As he had done so often in his earlier critical works, Graves once again holds up Robert Frost as his best example of the true poet who combines inspiration with craftsmanship. The poet must not bind himself too tightly to metrical and rhythmic pattern, nor fling off their yoke entirely.

About the moral obligations of the poet Graves is no less explicit:

> I have never been able to understand the contention that a poet's life is irrelevant to his work. . . .If it means that a poet may be heartless or insincere, or grasping in his personal relations and still write true poems, I disagree whole-heartedly. . . .And though it may be argued that no acceptable code of sexual morals can be laid down for the poet, I am convinced that deception, cruelty, meanness, or any violation of a woman's dignity are abhorrent to the Goddess. (pp. 33, 113)

Most importantly, the poet must allow no extra-literary activities, whether concerned with his livelihood or with his social duties, to interfere with his poetic practice. He must join no organization, whether social, political, or religious, if he intends to serve the Muse.

Graves's criticism since *The Crowning Privilege* consists, for the most part, either of brief occasional essays or of addresses delivered to audiences at American colleges and universities. Most of them have been collected in the volumes: *Five Pens in Hand*, *Steps*, and *Food for Centaurs*. There is in none of them any significant advance beyond, or alteration of the attitudes expressed in, *The Crowning Privilege*. In them there are several more denunciations of his old enemies—Milton, Wordsworth, and Pound—all based on ruthless dissections of individual poems. Graves tears apart *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* line by line to show that they are confused jumbles in which sense is sacrificed to Milton's fondness for Latinate diction. He reduces to absurdity Wordsworth's *The Solitary Reaper* in which he finds a slender and rather foolish event bloated into significance by verbosity, vague and abstract terms, and fuzzy logic. He, then, returns briefly to Pound's *Cantos* and says:

> Architecturally, ethically, or musically they invite no serious criticism; being a random sequence of sighs, coos, Bronx cheers, rhetorically garbled scraps of history, and quotations from foreign tongues, etc.

Then, having so neatly disposed of Pound, he turns his attention once again to Eliot, whose *Sweeney Among the Nightingales* he mocks chiefly because the classical allusions in it are inaccurate: Agamemnon was murdered in a bath-house, not in a wood; the wood of Mycenae was not bloody, but tranquil.

To those who would counter that this sort of criticism is pedestrian and carping, and that Eliot's use of classical allusions is for the communication of symbolic rather than literal truth, Graves would point out that symbolism which does not tally with fact is false symbolism.

His point may be a valid one, but the fact remains that such analysis as this one of Eliot's poem is ideal weapon for destruction, but useful for little else. Any poem, when its every detail is scrutinized sardonically and negatively, is likely to appear ludicrous and sloppily contrived. Such a technique as Graves's, while admittedly potent, is, nonetheless, a limited one.

In his 'Prologue to a Poetry Reading at Massachusetts Institute of Technology', he says that:

> In the present confused state of literature, I would probably rank as a traditionalist; but not in the sense that I oppose innovations in poetic technique. . . .I am a traditionalist only in so far as I believe that certain principles of poetry cannot be violated without poetry turning into something else. (*Five Pens in Hand*, pp. 333, 338)

There is little of objective, systematic criticism in Graves. He has frequently used his essays on poetry as vehicles for vituperative and cantankerous attacks on his fellow-poets, and his theories have been, over the years, often inconsistent. The fact is, however, that all his critical works are filled with common sense. His criticism is perhaps most valuable as an indicator of the progress of his ideas, and of the standards by which he composed the poems of each of his four periods.

Graves has after a long and rather stormy career reached at last some sort of safer harbour. But in consideration of his apparently undiminished productivity in criticism, it hardly seems safe even now to assume that his literary career can be summed up with any degree of finality. His recent lectures at Oxford have not, it is true, indicated any radical departure from the old attitudes. But his literary career has been nothing if not filled with surprises and sudden shifts in attitude; and he may have another phase or two left in him yet.

C. P. SNOW'S FICTIONAL THEMES AND LIFE-VIEW

A CRITICAL EXPLORATION

By K. P. Mukherjee

A study of the artistic validity of C. P. Snow's life-view is both interesting and critically rewarding. Why this is so, may be seen in the following factors of his fictional art.

Snow is steeped in one of the thorny problems of our age —the study of the bureaucratic man, his public life and private and the relationship between the two.

Snow is a social novelist; his is the novel of social analysis. He notices as sharply as anybody else the limitations and pitfalls in the contemporary society. But his is no crusade to bring about any revolutionary social reorientation, neither does he think it worth his grain substantially to modify the facts of life. He watches the complexity of the problem: the conflicts and cross-purposes both within the individual and the social consciousness. There is even the awareness that what need to be reconciled are ultimately irreconcilable. Snow is not either complacent or an escapist in the face of what he sees and feels. His is, therefore, the approach of the liberal humanist, of largeness and generosity, born of the vigour of mind and uninhibited imagination, aiming at sorting out the issues and removing the snags through a spirit of adjustment and accommodation, an exercise of sweet reasonableness, a pragmatic understanding of the many-sidedness of life and a conscious effort towards the elimination of personal idiosyncrasies and eccentricities so that the working out of some formula for adjudication and reconciliation is facilitated.

Snow is not a committed novelist. Yet he cannot and does not ignore the political creeds which mean much to the educated and intelligent community of today. But while he observes and highlights the strain, tension and bitterness of political rivalries, he keeps his own attitude to life unaffected by the shrapnel that often tears through the skin of an observer at an acrimonious political debate. His attitude is clear: man must live as a human being and not as a political robot. All political formulas and clichès, as he sees, have a cramping and withering effect on human personality.

Snow's attitude to society is summed up in the title of his novel-sequence *Strangers and Brothers*. Like many a novelist and poet of this generation his starting point is the acute consciousness of the loneliness of man brought about by the collapse of the traditional values, the increasing complexity of life and the widening psychic distance between man and man on account of ever-deepening crisis of belief and faith. Snow's hero Lewis Eliot—in a sense the entire novel sequence is Eliot's autobiography—starts his life as a stranger in the midst of his own people. He is born of parents who have been emotionally and psychically strangers to each other. Early in his own life he loses his mother and then sets himself up independently as a petty clerk in a government office where with his ambition to rise high in life, but condemned to quill-driving on a bare subsistence, he cannot at any time feel at ease. Later too, when he has turned the corner and is in the midst of a larger and more consequential world, Lewis intermittently feels that he is alone. But Lewis Eliot, maybe he has grievous faults, has yet a sustaining spirit of sensitiveness and sympathy and in the midst of the worst crises in his life—he has a plethora of them—he is at once firm and flexible, confident of himself and ready to understand and consider the other side. Lewis Eliot's impasse with his beloved Sheila Knight and then with his brother Martin Eliot are two of the many examples of this in Lewis's life. This attitude on account of the reiterated emphasis, which it gets at the novelist's hand in his delineation of the eventful career of Lewis Eliot and also elsewhere in his novels, may be taken as the life-view of the novelist himself.

Is this view of life just an excuse for the absence of a determined and positive ideology, a cringing spirit of compromise and a desperate scramble for status quo? No, it is not. The bureaucratic world whether under the regimentation of a dictatorial system or serving the ends of financial and industrial tycoons or operating within freer forms of representative government has come in for a lot of harsh criticism. There are novels which exhibit bureaucracy as a vitiated system. For good or ill Snow has not aligned himself with these scoffers and critics of bureaucracy. One may even find strong justification for Snow's approvingly highlighting and imaginatively recreating the making and mode of work of the modern policy-making and decision-taking executive and administrator. There can be hardly any doubt about the crucial role of the modern administrator in both national and international politics, the effects of which percolate through the state machinery and flow down to the individual members of a modern politically organized society. What the administrator does has thus a wide-ranging and intense social effect and what the individual thinks, feels and hopes for cannot be ignored by the administrator because political, social and economic justice is always a two-way traffic. In Snow's *Corridors of Power* there is a remark which throws into focus this side of his life-view. The remark is occasioned in course of a critical survey in which an attempt is made to draw a line of demarcation between what actually makes news and what is of real consequence to the imaginative artist. To quote the book: 'These pictures seem to be made up of all secret societies, all the grey eminences, we have ever heard of: Lenin's sealed train, the atomic spies, Harry Hopkins at the White House, the Yalta Conference—such pictures can be exciting, they may even be true, but they do not make it easier to understand the world we are living in. The working truth is a good deal more difficult, nothing like as lurid, and quite as interesting.'[1] This is always the patent fact in Snow's novels. It is the credo of the realist, a dedication to the imaginative rendering of the facts of life as affected by the decisions and modes of work of those who wield and exercise power in the various echelons of the present-day bureaucratic framework in a civilized community. And we must admit that such an account is bound to be at once interesting and useful.

What should be the staple of the modern novelist—realism or reality? The debate has gone on fairly for some time. In England, realism or naturalism, as is to be seen in Arnold Bennett's novels, was found unsatisfactory to the later novelists of a more disillusioned world. They rejected realism in favour of reality, i.e. their eyes were fixed not so much on external behaviour as on the psychic roots of them; and the gaze became inward leading to the subconscious reservoir of man's incipient dreams and desires. The 'interior monologue' type novel had its great vogue and success. But once again it was found that the technique meant alienating the novel from much of its social base and depriving it of any consistent narrative interest. C. P. Snow's novels in a sense attempt at bridging the two approaches or rather essentialization of the two in order that these may be coalesced and in the process a new approach and a corresponding technique be evolved.

The Romantic novel in England pictured a diffusion of power: public events assumed great importance and the novelist looked at the entire society in order to understand the upshot of any social, economic or political change. The die for this had been cast earlier by Henry Fielding who wrote comic epics in prose. The eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Whiggism had confirmed and strengthened the concept of power in widest commonalty spread, in the midst of which developed the novels of Dickens and Thackeray. But a fundamental shift was initiated by George Eliot who took up analysis of the factors and forces behind formation of opinion. It was a sociological approach with a difference inasmuch as the etiology of political action and its social ramification rather than political action as a *fait accompli* which this gifted novelist tried so shrewdly to focus on her fictional screen. Since her time power-structure in our world has undergone more change on account of which there has been the growing importance of the political executive or the technocrat, whose functioning is channelized through committees, through debates, conflicts and consensus, and whose conduct, motives and decisions have a deep value *per se* and at the same time are fraught with a national and international importance.

So we may say that Snow has given us the new political novel which reflects the modern age with its welfare state, the twin but contradictory manifestations of rapid democratization of the ways of life and concentration of political and administrative power in the hands of the bureaucracy, the tension and strain of the cold war politics and the nuclear diplomacy of the major nations of the world. Snow is not concerned, as has been said above, with the big guns and the news that strike the headlines of our newspapers. He is instead interested in the reverberations in the life of his own class—the middle class intellectual, the public servant and the hosts of young men and women from the middle classes who fight through obstacles in order to have a firm foothold on life, and in which path draw continual sustenance from those moral values that are fundamental to an intelligent, sensitive and responsible human being. Though the characters in Snow's novels are often seen engaged in thrashing out momentous issues, they are more largely shown in the midst of what we may call the trivia of life. The fact is the characters in Snow's novels rarely adopt a negative attitude towards life. Life fascinates them—its complexities and all that; they feel, think and act and never fail to realize that though they cannot change the course of history, nor bring about any social and economic revolution, their actions have consequence. They thus act with purpose and with a full sense of responsibility. Innovation or salvage which characterizes the stance of many a novelist of the present generation do not stir Snow's artistic conscience. Nihilism or isolation also cannot be his attitude because, as we see, he never tires of tapping the current of time, of bringing to bear his tolerant, equable and pragmatic spirit upon the details of the everyday world and thus constantly examining the present in the light of the past and with a hopeful looking forward to the future. It is rather the attitude which looks at life from the fundamental moral angle of the possible or, more correctly, the probable, harmony in the midst of the contrarieties and complexities, achievable through a maximum of openness of outlook, imaginative resilience, a delicately sensitive individual and social conscience, and to cap all, a moral centrality.

The charge of flatness often brought against Snow's fictional characters should prod us to examine another important aspect of Snow's art—its horizontal and not vertical view of life. Snow like Jane Austen, Trollope and George Eliot does not enquire into the 'why's' of life but into the 'how's' of it. How man lives in the modern managerial society and how that life is capable of being made livable—these are the questions to which Snow seeks answers. 'You've,' Snow tells us, 'got to understand how the world ticks, if you're going to have any chance of making it tick the better.'[2] This is the attitude of Lewis Eliot, the central character and the narrator in the entire sequence *Strangers and Brothers*, and the life of Lewis corresponds in significant directions to the life of Snow himself. This is the pragmatic approach surely, and also, what has been said before, the attitude of a novelist who sees life horizontally and not vertically. This, we may explain, is seeing life without any precondition or preconception; it stems from a deep and sympathetic interest in its particulars which when sifted and scrutinized may help discover the fundamental truths of human existence. This may also be called the tentative and laboratory approach to novel and, though it may have its limitations, it ought to earn for the novelist the unexceptionable self-justification that he is never escaping from life, nor arbitrarily imposing some formula or private vision upon it, but looking at it just as it develops whether in the light of the individual existence or that of a group. One has to admit that this is the lucid and direct way as opposed to the oblique and metaphorical way which has already been made too much of by the more publicized prophetic novelists and the stream-of-consciousness novelists.

Similarly, power, justice, loyalty, ambition, romantic day-dreaming, vanity, duplicity, prevarication and possessiveness are some of the abstract notions and concepts which, quite understandably in the broad canvas of a novel-sequence like *Strangers and Brothers*, recurrently become agitating issues in the novels in the sequence. But Snow who is more interested in living than in life does not attempt at moral generalizations. Rather he portrays how human beings, for what they are, go about in social life, interact and go through volleys of responses and counter-responses when confronted with these issues. And Snow's art does equal justice to both individuals and groups —on the personal conscience of a man like Martin Eliot (in *The New Men*) or the group psychology of university dons (in *The Masters*) there are momentous repercussions when they get involved in explosive issues, no matter whether these are political, social, intellectual or moral. It is in this process that Snow re-enacts for us the dramatic progression of life. It is undoubtedly the life of a limited cross-section of people. But, as said earlier, it is these people who count in the modern political society and in another way there seems to be no critical impropriety if we remember Jane Austen's concept of two inches of ivory and apply it approvingly to Snow's art. As a matter of fact there is a fundamental kinship between Jane Austen's art and C. P. Snow's.

So exploration of moral and spiritual problems is a means and not the end in Snow's novels. Its validity lies in its focusing the interesting process of the evolution of character. After having read a novel by Snow we may ask ourselves: have we been thrilled by any exciting discovery about the human psyche? has any attractively new idea been grasped by us? have we been given a fantasy of the unconscious? Obviously none of these. But we must all say that we have gone through a highly successful artifact of life and that we have seen the exciting drama of motives, desires, prejudices and instincts through which alive human characters have emerged who are none the worse for being the representatives of a particular segment of life.

An early novel by Camus, we remember, is *The Stranger*, written at the time when Snow was writing some of the early novels in the *Strangers and Brothers* sequence. The temporal affinity and the correspondence by half between the titles along with their being popular with the readers, rather trite factors to the literary critic, may, however, be used as the foils to set off the polarity of the two groups of contemporary fiction and the black and white contrast between the life-view of Camus and that of Snow. Camus in the above novel is the existentialist; his hero is a stranger to the world in which he lives and perhaps a stranger at times to his own self. What the hero Mersault plays for is the mere physical existence in a senseless and Manichean world. He has no illusions and hopes. His own uncontrollable impulses and the blindly fortuitous nature of things in the world drive him—an otherwise innocent man—to the commission of sin, crime and finally to death by hanging. As against this, in Snow the starting point is the same. Man is lonley and isolated in the midst of the mounting complexities of the world. Strangers to each other, that is how we are. But the cause is not lost. Strangers can be changed into brothers, though there is no formula which can serve as open sesame to this prospect. Moreover, the reverse may also be true at times —brothers may also become strangers under pressure of the conflicting nature of individual conscience, and the consequent clash of motives and attitudes. It is this jigsaw puzzle of darkness and light, tragedy and comedy, which Snow, knowing it like all sensitive and intelligent men that this is what life has been and is, projects through his novels. Occasional trimming which he indulges in, is more than adequately compensated for by a judicious presentation of characters and by wedding a simple and straightforward style to the content, the warp and woof of which come from his own rich and varied personal experiences. So whereas the hero in the Camus novel is very often enmeshed in thoughts, impulses and action that have no logical validity and that do not fully inhere in the novelist's vision and the artistic pattern of the novel, which is supposed to be the dramatic illusion of that vision, in Snow's novels the realistic pattern of the classical English novel is followed with minor alterations to contain a theme of human life seen in a vision of harmony. In Camus the interaction of plot and character leaves many knots untied and many angularities waiting unavailingly to be smoothed and resolved. To many readers *The Stranger* thus remains a freak and a stranger. But not so Snow's novels in which the cocoon is formed by what the central character and narrator Lewis Eliot sees and feels. And this cocoon expands and burgeons into the silk-worm with its intricate but beautiful colour-combination and harmony of form and shape. And does not this reflect the novelist's life-view? Lewis Eliot starts his life in the midst of the crumbling down of the conventional family ties. But by love and warmth, openness of outlook and capacity to understand and appreciate the view-points of others he is able continually to add to his circle of friends and wellwishers. Even when a dear or near one threatens to break away, Eliot takes the situation in his stride. A judicious re-examination of the other party's position and introspection for a review of his own stand always follow any such explosive development in his life. He is neither nervy nor strident. To his own ideals he never fails to hold fast. Yet he is always learning and improving himself by experience. In the *mélange* of strangers and brothers Lewis Eliot stands serene.

Snow himself has said that the thematic system of his sequence has the core design, which is the progress in the world of Lewis Eliot, and there is harmony and resonance between the larger world as seen by the narrator and what he feels and does in his own life.[3] This is a dynamic harmony and gives a much greater aesthetic satisfaction to the reader than the fantastic and logically dubious world of blind impulses and negative values which Camus creates in *The Stranger.*

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THE MYSTIQUE OF POWER IN MAILER'S *THE NAKED AND THE DEAD*

BY N. RAMAKRISHNA RAO

The Deer Park contains a statement about the artist which Mailer's public career and his journalism would indicate is an accurate self-analysis: 'The artist was always divided between his desire for power in the world and his desire for power over his work.' This observation does seem to apply to Mailer, who declared in an interview, 'I suppose I write because I want to reach people and by reaching them influence the history of my time a little bit.' To another interviewer he said, 'I feel that the final purpose of art is to intensify, even, if necessary, to exacerbate, the moral consciousness of people.' As Edmond L. Volpe aptly remarks: 'Norman Mailer obviously wants to inscribe the legend "Mailer was here" in the annals of history—and not just literary history. He wants to leave his mark, even if it has to be a scar, upon his time.'[1]

Mailer's personal desire for power in the world would naturally make attractive to him the kind of man who can seize and wield power over others. And that is precisely what is evident in *The Naked and the Dead*. *The Naked and the Dead* is a long novel based on the reactions of the members of an American platoon to their part in the invasion and occupation of a Japanese-held island. 'In its fully rounded portrayals of a dozen soldiers and officers, with interspersed short biographies called "The Time Machine", it gave the impression of showing American society in uniform.'[2]

Mailer employs a device he calls 'The Time Machine' to explore the quality of American civilian life which has shaped each of the men in the novel. The cross-section is carefully selected. Martinez, a Mexican, dreams of revenging himself upon white Protestant women. Goldstein is the suffering Jew. Wilson, a red-neck, illustrates the moral hypocrisy of the white-trash Southerner. Polack has been shaped by the slums, the Church, and the rackets; Brown by the crassness, shallowness, and dishonesty of the business world; Gallagher by the 'drabness, desolation, and waste' of the South Boston milieu. Croft, the platoon sergeant, is a vicious Texan whose wife has repaid his whoring in kind. Of the enlisted men in the platoon, only Red Valsen has not been crushed by his environment; although 'his deprivation has been severe, his sensitivity and insight have made him the "wisest" of the soldiers.'[3]

The other two characters chosen for 'The Time Machine', General Cummings and Lieutenant Hearn, objectify the polar philosophical and political positions in the novel. Cummings is a reactionary, a fascist, and Hearn is a disillusioned liberal. Both are the sons of dominant, wealthy, boorish fathers whom they rebel against. Cummings is sent to a military school and to West Point; his father, concerned about the boy's interest in sewing, painting, and music, hopes to make a man of him. Hearn goes to a country day school and, like Mailer himself, to Harvard.

Cummings is a latent homosexual; early in his marriage his wife discovers 'that he is alone, that he fights out battles with himself upon her body,' and she responds by seeking other men. Cummings had given way to his homosexual impulses only once, in Rome, but had been rolled by the man he picked up, and has decided that the 'thing that happened in the Rome alley is a danger sign....It must never come out again.'

Although even before Tolstoy literature had represented the common soldier as the victim of a force he could neither understand nor control, it is only in the present time that the army has become identified with the irrational and destructive authority of society itself. *The Naked and the Dead* incorporates this death-dealing power in two characters, General Cummings and Sergeant Croft. 'Mailer sees the army as a paradigm for the authoritarian, stratified society that will emerge as post-war fascism in America. It represents the concentration and apotheosis of power which will kill the spirit of individualism and arrange all men in serried ranks of fear ladder.'[4]

General Cummings is the prophetic spokesman of power morality: 'For the past century the entire historic process has been working toward greater and greater consolidation of power....Your men of power in America, I can tell you, are becoming conscious of their real aims for the first time in our history.' Accused of being a reactionary by Hearn, he dismisses Hearn's narrow political frame of reference, and speaks of the coming 'renaissance of power'. The war is not fought for ideals, it is simply 'a power concentration'; to attempt to plan for a just society is foolish since 'the only morality of the future is a power morality', and so on—the word is seldom out of his mouth. His obsession with power dates from the First World War, when he had watched an Allied attack upon the German lines and had been overwhelmed by an almost religious vision: 'To command all that. He is choked with the intensity of his emotion, the rage, the exaltation, the undefined and mighty hunger.' When he ordered an attack he feels the thrill of total control: 'The troops out of the jungle were disposed from the pattern in his mind. In the night, at that moment, he felt such power that it was beyond joy. . . .' He feels that he can control everything on the island. But after the Anopopei campaign, the general has to fight to hold on to his vision: 'For a moment he almost admitted that he had very little to do with this victory, or indeed any victory—it had been accomplished by a random play of vulgar good luck larded into a casual net of factors too large, too vague, for him to comprehend.' The controller of the island is himself controlled in unfathomable ways. The master technician has no idea of who runs things, though he will go on pretending it is himself.

General Cummings sees life as a game of chess, a continual manoeuvring for positions of power, with success going to the cleverest and strongest. His opponent in the dialectic is his aide, Lieutenant Hearn, the scion of a wealthy man. As a civilian, Hearn forsook the power his father offered him because he subscribed to the liberal interpretation of individualism. 'He is a foil to Cummings in his power quest, a kind of middleman —commanded before he commands.'[5] The invitation to power continually attracts him. He shows an ambiguous attitude toward power, fascinated with the theory while resisting its practice, which disappoints Cummings who once saw Hearn as a potential equal. Finally Hearn is given command of the I and R squad, his opportunity to act on his belief in liberal and humanitarian leadership. As the patrol advances he gradually puts aside his self-analysis and begins to lose himself in the joy of positive action. But even as he does so he realizes the 'shoddy motive' behind the action, and then, by extension, behind the whole life. 'All his life he had flirted with situations, jobs, where he could move men, and always, as if he had sensed the extent of the impulse within himself, he had moved away, dropped things when they were about to develop, cast off women because deep within him he needed control and not mating.'

This moment of awareness is the first suggestion we have of a possible change in Hearn. 'In the midst of the only genuine act of his life, he learns that basically he is motivated by a lust for power, that, unknowingly, he has always belonged emotionally to the class which intellectually he has despised: the class of his father, Cummings and Croft.'[6] His impulse is now to turn back with the platoon, acknowledge to himself and to the world that he is unfit to command, and give up his commission. But before he is able to act, he is tricked by Croft into running the mission and a short time later is killed.

Sergeant Croft is the instrument of Cummings's theory. Mystical forces work in him as they do in the General. He is a man, like the General, whose sexual energies have been perverted. With Cummings, homosexual tendencies are channelized into power manipulation; with Croft, the frustrated rage for sex is translated into hatred of everything outside of himself.

Torturing and killing a Japanese prisoner and witnessing the death of even one of his own men are experiences that raise him to a pitch of ecstasy, because the knowledge of death is a source of power and a form of self-gratification for him. 'Leading the men was a resposibility he craved: he felt powerful and certain at such moments.' 'Once he reappraises death in war and rids himself of the fear of dying, he settles on a mystic quest of absolute power.' With his influence over men cut short by his inferior mind, Croft senses that he can take on added power only if he becomes number one at subduing nature. His quest shows itself most consciously during his attempt to climb Mount Anaka which proves too high a challege. Near the end, he experiences just enough doubt to justify his feeling 'rested by the unadmitted knowledge that he had found a limit to his hunger.'

Mailer is a chronicler of American power. Though his sympathy is with Hearn and Valsen, his admiration goes to the men of power, Cummings and Croft. This fascination with power is also apparent in the repeated descriptions in this and other works of the reactions men experience when they kill. The exercise of man's ultimate power over others brings with it for Mailer's killers a heady exhilaration. Much as Mailer is repelled by the cruelty and sadism of Cummings and Croft, he is also awed by the mystique of power. In this early novel, he attempts to relate the actions and reactions of his characters to their psychological past, 'but it is apparent that he has already detected the arcanum of being that many years later he will seek to explore'.[7]

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3. Howard M. Harper (Jr.), *Desperate Faith* (Popular Prakashan, 1969), p. 98.
4. Chester E. Eisinger, Introduction to Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*, p. xx.
5. Donald F. Kauffman, *Norman Mailer: The Countdown* (Southern Illinois University Press, 1969), p. 71.
6. Donald F. Kaufmann, op.cit. p. 70.
7. Edmond L. Volpe, op.cit. p. 115.

KOBA:
A TRAGEDY OF REVOLUTION

BY JAGDISH V. DAVE

TRAGEDY of revolution voicing the recent frustration and failure of the human race in building up an ideal, classless society, is one of the most exciting modern types. Raymond Williams comes to this conclusion in his scholarly work *Modern Tragedy* after an acute analysis of the concept of tragedy and description and definition of its various types. He has written *Koba* especially to illustrate the tragedy of revolution and tagged it to *Modern Tragedy* as its third part.

In the preceding parts of the book, the author traces the origin of tragedy to its simple Greek notion and outlines its gradual development into complex modern forms. Catastrophe and death are usual occurrences in all ages. But man's tragic response or reaction to it varies from age to age. The history of the concept of tragedy illustrates a subtler evolution of man's awareness of his inescapable 'predicament' at all levels of existence, his painful recognition of material universe being at variance with the deepest yearnings and aspirations of his soul. Different types of tragedy express this awareness or recognition at different stages of its growth.

The Greeks developed the awareness of Man's metaphysical tragedy. They felt that man in this world is alienated and homesick. The changing spectrum of circumstances and inevitable death thwart his craving for happiness and life. When he falls on his knees and prays to heaven for help and mercy, his primitive intellect finds in thundering clouds and flashing levin derisive laughter and scorn at his meek prayers. He imagines a whole pantheon above clouds, gods who are themselves happy, but who rejoice in human suffering. Homer writes:

> This is the lot the gods have spun for miserable men, that they should live in pain; yet themselves are sorrowless.
> (*Iliad*, tr. A. Lang, W. Leaf and E. Myers, Modern Library, New York, p. 456)

Aeschylus, Euripides and Sophocles have embodied the same philosophy in their tragedies.

But the Greeks had an idea of a certain moral order without which tragedy is not possible. In every case the fall of the hero is the result of a certain error of judgment unconsciously committed which brings about an infringement of the moral order, and which has to be atoned for with appropriate punishment. The gods are not needlessly cruel, although often we feel that for minor errors the punishments are out of all proportion. The suffering and the downfall of the hero are justified and accounted for. The spectators who are excited with pity and fear at these spectacles, though horrified, do not lose their faith in the righteousness of the fundamental moral order of the universe. They shed tears; but these are not tears of unrelieved pessimism. They lament the infringement of the moral law committed by the hero, and are warned in time.

But the moderns have grown fully and decisively aware of man's metaphysical tragedy, and his alienation in his own world. They have firmly and courageously grasped the exacting human situation, but have not invented any superstitions to allay man's homesick spirit. They are boldly pessimistic and refuse to be hoodwinked into any false and facile beliefs which may lessen man's anguish and reconcile him to his fate. They find the world void of meaning and without God. Our existence is absurd and irrational. There can be no moral order sympathetic to man in the vast and void dominions of 'Dicing Time', 'Crass Casualty' and 'Purblind Doomsters', and in its absence there is no possibility of tragic response on our part. Hence, to write a tragedy on metaphysical plane—on man in relation to nature—is impossible in the present day circumstances.

Tragedy in modern times has moved from the metaphysical to the social level because there is a similar shift in the thinking of man too. Metaphysical ills and evils are, of course, incurable. We cannot by any means make the universe sympathetic to us. But social evils are curable. If some of man's sorrows spring from his improper relations to his fellow beings, we can try hopefully to remove them. Let us, therefore, reconstruct society in such a way that all in it may find peace and possible happiness. It is this enlightened socialistic thinking which gives birth to revolution. It is with this vision that Marx and his like brushed aside futile philosophical wranglings which yielded no result, and plunged into vigorous social, political and economic thinking with a view to bringing about radical changes in the framework of society.

But when man turned his gaze from the impotent heaven to his own kind for help and sympathy, he met another frustration. He realized that when the socialist revolution triumphs, the old wine fills the new bottle. The tyrants are killed but new tyrants disguised as the saviours of the people emerge to seize sceptre and crown. Cries of equality, fraternity and freedom remain shut in the slogans, and society remains as before divided into masters and slaves. Masters change, but the conditions of the masses do not improve. These so-called saviours bind others in the name of freedom, persecute them in the name of justice, and divide in the name of equality. Religion is banished, but its substitute, socialism, with its new taboos and principles is even more an 'opium of the people', and its inquisitions are more ruthless than those of Christianity.

Here we meet the absurdity of existence at social level. It is not that only the physical universe is irresponsive to man's miserable cries. Even his fellow-sufferers have no desire to respond. It seems that even social evils are irremediable. The revolution fails because except a few selfless idealists nobody is prepared to sacrifice his self-interests for the larger and collective good of mankind. But the difficulty is that it is impossible for the modern man to inspire the people to make any sacrifices, for he has lost the language of values. Sincerity and selflessness may have some poetic sense of glory, but it cannot appeal to the vast mass of mankind which is pragmatic and prosaic. They feel it better to be happy themselves than to make others happy in the face of the ultimate dark that draws nearer every day. Absolute nihilism is the achievement of modern man and once it is accepted, it is impossible to urge the people to put aside their individual interests and work philanthropically to build up an ideal structure of society.

The failure of revolution has left man dazed and confounded amid the nihilistic darkness. He has lost all hope, and has arrived at a kind of philosophical stalemate in the realm of values. There are novels like *Animal Farm* of George Orwell expressing such pessimism about revolution. But they are not tragedies of revolution. Raymond Williams rightly observes:

> The tragic action, in its deepest sense, is not the confirmation of disorder, but its experience, its comprehension and its resolution.
>
> (*Modern Tragedy*, Chatto & Windus, London, 1969, p. 83)

Tragedy does not, and ought not to confirm pessimism. It resolves disorder by evolving new values, reviving hope and providing a new spring-board for positive action. But an age suffering from absolute nihilism cannot produce great tragedies.

But this philosophical stalemate, this utter hopelessness in the realm of values, was a momentary swoon, not the final acceptance of defeat. Currently some of the present day thinkers have striven hard to evolve a new humanistic ideology which is not too ambitious, and to create new self-justified human values. They reject religious and revolutionary ideologies alike, for both of them have with their special jargons attempted to divide people into masters and slaves, generated hatred and justified murder. The days of romantic ideas about revolution, which, people thought, might bring a millennium, a sort of *Ram Raj*, on his earth, are over. The life of man is a short span of ceaseless struggle, and happiness is his right and reasonable quest. Each one of us should be allowed to pursue his own chosen path of happiness freely, provided that he does not harm others, or create hurdles in their ways. We should moderate our freedom and accept certain self-imposed restrictions. We have to evolve an important new value and that is the identity of the human race and the sanctity of human life. Humanness of man whether he is a tyrant or slave should be respected. Not revolution, but revolt should be our ideal. We should ceaselessly rebel and strive to save society from the extremes of tyranny and anarchy. Violence ought to be in the minimum. But sometimes it is inevitable. If the tyrant is too obstinate and cruel, one has the right to kill, but one must also be ready to die. Murder must be atoned for by the martyr's death.

This is the philosophy of Dr. Albert Camus as propounded in his ambitious treatise *The Rebel*, and is shared by many other kindred thinkers. And it is this philosophy of new values which follows the experience and comprehension of the revolution as a right resolution in Raymond Williams's play *Koba*. Hence *Koba* in a real sense of the word is a tragedy of revolution. It shows the horrors of revolution. But it also gives us a hope. Without this hope it would not be a tragedy.

Now let us consider the play itself.

Joseph is a talented son of a poor widow who belongs to the lowest class of society—the sweepers and cleaners. Her highest ambition is that her son should become a doctor of divinity and earn honour and status in society. Ignorant and poor as she is, she aspires to prosper and advance only within the established framework of society. She is well accustomed to various social injustices like all in her oppressed class. Hence, it is beyond her even to dream of shattering the existing social structure based on iniquity and oppression. But her son is of a different clay. Fire smoulders in his bosom to burn out all that is unjust and cruel. Generation after generation, he thinks, his ancestors and brethren have tilled the earth and reaped the harvest by the sweat of their brow. But all the while the aristocrats of society—the sophisticated robbers—who abide in palaces and spend their time in dalliance, have been robbing them of their precious yield. It is certainly a philistine society in which those who usurp and waste are hailed as lords and bishops, while those who toil and produce are condemned as serfs. Later on he tells his comrade Luke:

> Generation after generation, poor and hungry and dying. These men are my seed. . . . The child at the breast becomes the man at plough, gives the earth his blood and gives others his harvest. . . . War and tyranny and fever and ignorance; generation on generation, taking and destroying our children. Watch now if you can. Watch.
>
> (*Modern Tragedy*, p. 22)

He is determined to break the age-old shackles imposed and tightened on him and his class by the scheming priests and patricians.

But he does not want to offend his mother. He does not want to hurry. He thinks it better to learn the enemy's secrets, their strengths and loopholes, before embarking on a battle with them. Hence, he joins a theological college. He learns from the college, as he tells his revolutionary comrades Lado and George later, 'much that is false', but also 'a necessary discipline'. The enemy, he thinks, are strong because they have coherent belief which cannot be questioned and which had to be followed. If the revolutionaries want victory, they must be all dedicated to one idea and must unquestioningly follow the leader's commands. They must behave as the parts of one organic whole, and not as separate individuals with contradictory opinions. He was quite right in perceiving this demand of the day, this need of history. History elevates those who perceive and respond to its needs of the hour, and breaks those who fail to do so. He says:

> If you have fifty different ideas, you are fifty times weaker and will get nothing done. We have to learn discipline or we shall all be destroyed. (Ibid. p. 213)

As he could see this need of discipline, and act ruthlessly to fulfil it, he was qualified to be the leader of the revolution.

When he felt that he had learnt sufficiently from the college, he left it incurring even the displeasure of his mother. With definite ideas and full dedication he joins the revolutionary party, assumes an underground name 'Koba'—meaning, a man who cannot be mastered—and soon becomes a tower of strength to the party. The chief of the party is Jordan, an ordinary-looking man of medium height. He has no impressive bearing or a halo of romance. In fact he does not like these. But he is absolutely selfless, unassuming and a true leader of the people. He himself does not belong to the lower classes like Joseph —Koba—and hence what inspires him to revolt is not a feeling of revenge for the ruling class. He is honest and capable of clear thinking. He would never lose sight of the ends of the revolution even in the maddening hours of victory. He does not have that Stalinic reserve and aloofness to create in his comrades any sense of awe. He lives among them as one of them, for a true leader must display his emotional identity with the people, not only in rhetorical writings and speeches, but also in real character and conduct.

Koba is unable to appreciate his leader's philosophy. He is capable of quick resolution, but not clear thinking; fierce action, but not calm judgment. He is sincere but a vengeful mediocre. Hence, he advises Jordan to develop a little aloofness:

> To lead the people is to be the best of the people, to show in yourself all their future strength. Then you must not only be great, but seem great. You must get people asking: when will he come, when will Jordan be here? We are all only men, all equal in that. To be a leader needs emphasis, and emphasis must be organised. You should not say 'I'm Jordan' and step from the corner. You can't be the father if you behave like the son.
> (Ibid. p. 216)

All this is Stalinic in tone. We find here a premonition of a tragic failure of revolution. We feel, as we find later, that vengeful Koba when empowered to work out his will without hindrance is sure to perpetrate greater horrors to atone for the previous tyrannies, and to turn a despotic ruler of the people. But Jordan is a sensible man, capable of viewing the revolution realistically and shorn of all romance. He knows that if one person becomes a sort of demi-god, claims to be embodying all the aspirations of the people, he will crush them once more under his jack-boots and deprive them of their hard-won liberty. Hence, he is careful to lay emphasis on principles rather than on any person who tries to practise them. His reply to Koba is significant:

> You are still young, Koba, and you have inevitably these romantic ideas. Yes, I am a leader, but not as myself. I am only leader so long as I am right. When I am wrong, I am nothing. It is never one man, but history that is leading us. (Ibid. pp. 216-7)

But Jordan knows that history needs Koba's fierceness and firmness. He is a better tool, but a bad guide of himself. Hence, Jordan does not want to lose him.

Koba gradually becomes Jordan's right-hand man, goes to prison several times, escapes from there and continues to conduct vigorous underground activities. In the struggle he has many bitter experiences. He remembers all the warders, soldiers and their masters who had striven hard to silence his voice by torture and to extinguish the spark of revolt growing into flame. He is not large-hearted enough to forgive even these unwilling tools of the tyrants. Bitter experiences only increase the venom he has already stored against them. He is small-minded and vindictive, and therefore resolves to exterminate them all without mercy when power comes to him.

The revolution, ultimately, is achieved. The tyrants are dethroned and executed. But it is the post-revolutionary work which is most important and exacting. To die under the heroic excitement the death of a martyr in the struggle is easy enough. But to keep up sustained idealism and dedication to the cause of society's upliftment even when both struggle and victory have become mere memories of past is rather difficult. What is then necessary is cool, calculating intellect of a selfless leader who never forgets the ends of the revolution. Victory of arms is not the real victory. It can be achieved only when the noble ends of revolution are fully realized. George, one of the revolutionaries, rightly says:

> The banners are fine, but it is time to put them away. The reality now is not banners, but committees, white papers, administration, supplies. These images of the revolution are a luxury. We must make the real revolution.
>
> (Ibid. pp. 223-4)

But when victory is won, the ends are lost sight of. The old structure of society is shattered. It is now necessary to concentrate all energy and effort on the task of uplifting the oppressed, mitigating their privations and abolishing their poverty to raise a new and just order of society. But instead of doing that the leaders of various parties join the fierce struggle for power. Each party claims to be representing the 'people'. Each one of these parties tries to exploit the public sentiments associated with the word 'people'. The kings and the popes spoke in the name of the Providence whose representatives, they claimed, they were, and did the foulest things. Now the party and its leaders speak in the name of the 'people', and do the cruelest deeds to gain or retain power. Previously in the name of religion—'the heart of the heartless world, the soul of the soulless conditions, the opium of the people'—the wolves and vultures devoured and glutted over the poor victim, the masses of nonentities. Now new wolves and vultures come with a novel promise of redressing their injuries, of leading them to the shining 'Future'—something nonexistent, a mere abstract concept like God or religion—and do not hesitate to crush their present aspirations. 'Ashes, blood, death, misery, harted: these, in reality, have been our history,' says Koba (Ibid. pp. 231-2). He is right. But the irony is that the revolutionaries like him also continue it, and that even in future, history will not change its course turning into a story of life, happiness and love. This can be safely affirmed on a critical examination of any revolution. History moves on in its inexorable way, and even those who understand its nature and strive to alter it, are swept off their feet by its mad rush. It bears witness to the fact that the fate of poor and the miserable has ever been the same. It is their eternal destiny to drudge all their life and die in misery, whatever the system of state—monarchy or anarchy, autocracy or democracy. Revolution, to the masses, means nothing except a mere change of government.

Jordan's party out-manoeuvres the rest and forms the Government. Mark asks Jordan and Koba a very sensible question:

> Coldness and hatred have bred coldness and hatred through the history of the world. Can we stand today and be sure that the chain is broken? What shall we create, as we are now? (Ibid. p. 233)

Koba's answer to this question fully implies that soon another very heavy shackle will fall on the people. He says:

> You are assuming a victory. . . . Do you think they (enemies) will leave us alone to create anything? With all the power and cunning they have they will come back and back. If we weaken for a moment, we shall be down with innocents and the martyrs. We can only survive if we become even harder. . . . With our own hands, with our own strength,

> without illusions and without concessions, we will become so strong, so strong as a people, that if the enemy comes, we can smash him; if a friend hesitates, we can push him aside; if a comrade weakens, we can go without him.
>
> (Ibid. p. 233-4)

Koba is right in saying that the real victory is not still won. But he is slow to perceive the real enemy. Enemies are not going to invade from outside. They are likely to grow from within. The revolutionaries killed the tyrants in whom the hunger for power and selfish pleasure—the real enemy—could fully grow. But this very enemy lurked within the bosoms of the revolutionaries themselves. This enemy always awaits an opportunity to grow and manifests itself again and again in new forms. This opportunity it does get with the seizure of power in the new victors. Koba could not understand this, and therefore, he becomes the surest and the most fatal weapon of the Devil.

But while Jordan was alive, the potential despot in Koba could not become the actual one. Jordan could tactfully check and restrain and direct him. But unfortunately Jordan meets the fate of all the popular leaders like Gandhiji or Lincoln and falls to the bullet of an assassin. Koba succeeds him as the chief of the party, and wields absolute power. He undertakes at once to strengthen the state, kills or exiles one by one all his comrades whose sole crime, as he says, is to go against the people's interests. The party is the people, and he is the party. Therefore in himself he personifies the people, and his voice, he says, is the voice of the people. His enemies are the people's enemies. It is a strange logic indeed. His people exist nowhere except in his public orations, for none of the individuals or groups can claim that title. His word is law and his decision is the people's decision. This is not a mystic identification of a great patriot like Mahatma Gandhi with his people. This is rank absolutism and power's abuse which Stalin practised. He tries and terrifies all sensible comrades. Even his wife Ruth is driven to commit suicide. But Koba does not relent. He rules, and rules absolutely.

But everything in time has an end. Koba had done to death many. But now he himself is seriously ailing and death hovers over him. His secretary calls a doctor. But the doctor's own relatives were murdered at Koba's command. Hence he bluntly refuses to treat Koba, and derisively laughs at the begging and beseeching secretary. He says that Koba has no right to pray for mercy, for he has never shown any to the condemned. Koba himself does not pray, does not beg. In unbending dignity he tries to master death without anybody's help, but dies after a good deal of struggle.

Here comes the tragic climax. Joseph started his career as a fighter for freedom, became Koba, and ended as a tyrant. He struggles heroically, errs, fails and dies. He is genuinely a tragic hero symbolizing a successful revolutionary. Vengefulness and mediocrity are his tragic flaws. He found the society divided into masters and slaves when he joined the party, and left it so with a change of masters. The tragic disorder is established. The words of the doctor aptly describe it:

> There have been tyrannies before. It is a normal history. But this with us is unique. Other systems have exploited the worst in man; his aggression, his greed, his capacity to be cruel. Our system is different. What is exploited in us is the best in man: loyalty, comradeship, self-sacrifice, the future. We have given all these beyond measure, and Koba has taken them; taken and killed. . . . Enemy, now, has lost its meaning: there is no such distinction. We are our own enemies, and we are destroying ourselves.
>
> (Ibid. p. 273)

When Koba dies Mark and Luke, his exiled comrades, return, take up in their hands the reins of the regime, and analyse the tragedy of Koba. What is it that broke Koba? He was sincere and acted according to his vision. But he was short-sighted and his vision itself was defective. If he had recognized the changing needs of history and reacted accordingly, probably he would not have been responsible for his own as well as his revolution's tragedy. When revolution was a distant dream, the need was one. It was discipline and unflinching obedience to the leader's commands. Koba rose to the occasion and met the need firmly and ruthlessly. But he could not realize that the post-revolutionary needs were different. People were tired of slavery, and wanted to breathe the air of freedom

—the real freedom of thought, speech and action within moderate bounds. Koba could not satisfy this need. Mark rightly says:

> The need has changed. He became irrelevant. While he served the need, the genuine need, he was changing the world, and that is what we remember. The tragedy of Koba is that the need broke him, and in the end destroyed him. What he made has condemned him. This is where we now are. . . . Koba is dead, and his world dies with him. This is what life demands and it is a tragic justice.
>
> (Ibid. p. 278)

The tragedy of Koba is accounted for. Now the last portion of the drama establishes some values which all must respect and which can be realized in life. The sanctity of human life is one such. Mark orders the arrest and execution of the warder and the secretary because they are Koba's agents, and says that there should be no more killing afterwards. But Luke objects to this and says to kill the agents now is just to kill the dogs when their master is dead. He turns to the arrested warder and secretary and says:

> I face these men who face death. And I see in their shadowed faces, not the agents I know, but brothers, men of my own kind, men sharing my breath, men who have lived in ordinary places, and have killed and forgotten their kind. The evil cannot be shifted from them or from others, but the judgement dies, the habit of anger dies, for over the untold dead I cannot be blind to the neighbour's look in these men's eyes. (Ibid. p. 279)

Crimes and condemnations are the usual story. But it has to stop. Awakened consciousness of the advanced humanity has to learn at last to behave as brothers, not as strangers. Human nature is essentially weak and erring and struggling for strength. We have to understand and sympathize, pity and forgive. All of us live an alienated existence in the ghastly universe of death. Hence, the judgment that condemns without pity, anger that shows the lack of proper understanding of man's absurd plight must die. All this is as spelt out in clear terms by Albert Camus, a passionate humanist of our era, in *The Rebel*, and illustrated in his plays and novels.

But violence, however inhuman, is sometimes absolutely necessary. When hardened tyrants turn deaf ears to simple supplications and mild protests, they have to be killed. But only they have the right to kill who have the readiness to die. Luke rightly says:

> What we write in blood we shall write in our own blood.
> (Ibid. p. 269)

This also is affirmed by Camus in *The Rebel*; he writes there that if the rebel is compelled to kill, he should also 'accept his own death and sacrifice' (*The Rebel*, tr. by A. Bower, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1960, p. 249).

One lesson which the modern upheavals teach us is that revolution is a beautiful dream when at a distance—whether far in the future or remote in the past—but a horrible reality when realized. Under its control society as a totalitarian state, perhaps, prospers, but individual man suffers untold persecutions and dies repeated deaths. What we now need is not revolution, but ceaseless revolt against any singular extreme. Revolt or rebellion keeps up what Camus describes as 'moderation' or the balance between tyranny of any political system and total lawlessness. In the absence of the revolt, the ideas which the revolution preaches continue to operate even when their need is over. The result is stupefaction or stagnation. The revolt keeps society alive and alert and sensitive to the new needs as they arise. It is this value of revolt which also is established at the end of this play.

This tragedy is a tragedy of the futurist philosophy of communism. Communism is a new religion, more fanatic than either Islam or Christianity, and the Future is its God which exists nowhere. Reference to the Future in the communistic regime makes every cruelty an act of goodness. Koba had allured the people in the name of the Future, and ruled. In his oration which he delivered at the time of Jordan's death, he had exhorted his comrades to lift up in due honour the dead body of the beloved leader:

> Take him up. Walk firmly. It is the future you are carrying.
> (*Modern Tragedy*, p. 240)

But this futurism of Koba proves fatal to the people. The experience is useful only as a lesson. At the end of the play the new Joseph symbolizing a man shorn of tyranny and power returns to the stage and says as the right conclusion while carrying the dead body of Koba:

> Take him up, walk firmly, it is the past we are carrying.
> The action is ended, and we can make a beginning.
> (Ibid. p. 282)

The whole play is written in one passionate breath. Tragic tension prevails all throughout. The various revolutionaries are found grappling with grave social and political issues, and groping in the darkness of nihilism. From the point of view of thought, the play is absurdist; but technically it is a traditional play in two acts. It embodies the collective suffering of human society, not the individual suffering of a tragic hero. It is a tragedy of revolution, and hence, instead of finding flesh and blood human beings, we find in it the personified ideas and passions for freedom and happiness. There is not a single character which continues to haunt our imagination after we have finished the reading of the play. The death of Jordan does not draw from us tears of pity; the death of Koba does not relieve the tragic tension, for Jordan is not a hero and Koba is not a villain. All are the comrades committed to the same social cause. It is History which elevates some of them to the positions of power and honour in the hour of its need. Again, it is History which degrades them when its need changes and they become irrelevant. In fact, there are only two characters in the play: (1) Man and (2) History. The hero is Man in the collective sense, and fate reappears as History, more inexorable and blind than ever. Its ghastly indifference to the struggling mortals on the stage of Time is wrose than the derisive laughter of the Greek gods. Man tries and tries but tries in vain to direct its course, and to shape its future according to his heart's desire. The tragic tension is relieved at the end of the play by the revived hope that if Man can grasp cool-heartedly the changing needs of History and react to them befittingly from time to time, his absurd plight on the social level can be made more rational in degree if not quite harmonized.

BOOK REVIEW

Imagery and thought in the Metaphysical Poet, by R. S. Varma, S. Chand & Co., New Delhi, 1972, pp. 234

The late Professor R. S. Varma's book has a Foreword by Evans of Hungershall in which his 'sensitivity and depth' have been noted in relation to an alien culture. This praise is well deserved by the author who has set out to study the nature and function of poetic imagery, especially those of the metaphysical poets with special reference to Marvell. The chapter on Marvell reveals not only sensitiveness but also insight. In attempting this task Professor Varma has to examine the current body of literature on the subject and he has ably summarised the ideas and theories of most well known authors although he has pointed out in the 'Prefatory Note' that 'An important point which is throughout emphasized here is that in a metaphysical poem what matters is a demonstration of the poet's technical competence or what the *seicento* critics of the seventeenth century called *ingegno*, i.e. wit. This wit, as critics like Rosemund Tuve, J. B. Leishman, Mario Praz, Helen Gardner, Josephine Miles and F. R. Leavis have demonstrated, is a highly complex subject having literal, social and cultural ramifications but Professor Varma confines himself chiefly to its literal or even rhetorical usage, thereby limiting the scope of his explanation although so far as the range of his information is concerned it is wide enough. In the seventeenth century the term "metaphysical" implied contemplative or speculative, something concerned with the supraphysical world whereas for us in the twentieth century it has a different connotation which is chiefly an affair of a style that is an index of a mode of apprehending reality—a mode that is a blending of the intellectual and the sensuous or emotive.' And hence what ought to strike any mature reader of the poetry of the 'School of Donne' is not the blending of heterogeneous elements but the intelligence and sensitiveness with which they sought to grasp the bewildering phenomena of a constantly expanding universe and the elegance and poise, both aspects of a cultural milieu, with which they related that experience. In his discussion on 'thought' Professor Varma, however, does not lay sufficient stress on this aspect and hence he does not quite perceive the relationship between 'thought' and 'imagery'. Frank Kermode in *Romantic Image* (Routledge, 1957) tells us:

> Miss Tuve's now famous demonstration that Donne's images have a logical, or at any rate a pseudo-logical function, was a direct affront to the basis of the theory that he was a poet of the modern Image; but it can scarcely have surprised anybody who had read Donne open-eyed and seen how much he depended on dialectical conjuring of various kinds, arriving at the point of wit by subtle syllogistic misdirections, inviting admiration by slight but totally destructive perversities of analogue, which re-route every argument to parodox. (p. 147)

This observation penetrates into the wide ramifications of the thinking process that underlie metaphysical imagery. To this we may add the account of E. R. Leavis in 'The Line of Wit' in *Revaluation*. Leavis is concerned with the milieu that shaped metaphysical wit—the social mode with all its variety and complexity being the impetus behind such witty expression. Hence the 'conceit' is inextricably embedded in the socio-cultural matrix despite all the influences that were brought into England from Europe. J. A. Mazzeo and F. J. Warnke have drawn our attention to some of the European interpretations like mannerist, precieux, baroque, rococo. Professor Varma, however, is quite correct in his observation that metaphysical poetry marked a shift from Aristotle's theory that 'poetry is imitation' to the doctrine that 'poetry is expression' (p. 200). Accordingly the metaphysical image 'serves as an operational unit in the poem's structure'. One wishes that Professor Varma had demonstrated this function by the analysis of some poems instead of classifying them in the manner of Caroline Spurgeon. We know that the interest of the Renaissance in images sprang from a concern with verbal expression as well as a concern with philosophical values e.g. Renaissance Platonism, mysticism and occultism. It was an attempt to explore and confront reality as it was understood at that time —and that reality as interpreted by the 'new philosophy' was extremely complex, often baffling. Professor Varma examines the impact of Ramist logic on metaphysical poetry and repeats some conclusions of Rosemund Tuve but feels that 'It is not possible to establish any firm relationship between Ramist logic and Metaphysical poetry' (p. 57).

When Cowley in the ode *To The Royal Society* says that 'Words are but pictures of the Thought', he is surely conceiving of a direct relationship between pictures and thought and such an assumption is to be met with in other poets too. That, however, does not exhaust the meaning of the image which was also a rhetorical device or a verbal structure. It is by approaching the metaphysical image, from both these points of view that we can perhaps steer clear of the many confusions that have clung to it since the days of Dr. Johnson. Professor Varma has attempted to understand his subject from many directions but there is an absence of integration in his findings leading to a real understanding of what Herbert Read calls the 'poetic Gastalt'. This understanding, however, is a difficult accomplishment as is evident from the writings of scholars like Bush, Sypher, Hatzfeld, Martz and Hauser. In spite of its limitations, Professor Varma's book is a noble attempt to expound an abstruse subject.

B. Das

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